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LONE NOMINEE

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Israel orders evacuation of southern Gaza

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PM Carney calls snap election in Canada

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WORLD TB DAY

An equitable health coverage

Integration of TB services within public health system is key

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SUNDAY SPECIAL

Super Kings, Sunrisers off to winning starts

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Erdogan's main rival jailed on 'graft charges'

Reuters
ISTANBUL

A Turkish court on Sunday jailed President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's main political rival, Istanbul Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu, pending trial on graft charges, in a move likely to stoke the country's biggest protests against the government in more than a decade.

Mr. Imamoglu has denied the charges, calling them "unimaginable accusations and slanders".

European leaders and thousands of protesters had criticised the Opposition Republican People's Party leader's detention on Saturday as politicised and undemocratic. The government has warned against protests, extending a nationwide ban on street gatherings for four more days on Saturday.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 16

Honey-trap issue: Kharge meets CM

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In the midst of the explosive honey-trap allegations made by Cooperation Minister K.N. Rajanna that have exposed chinks within the Congress, AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday and they are believed to have discussed the fallout of the charges.

In another development, Rajendra Rajanna, MLC and son of the Cooperation Minister, said he would complain to the State police chief next week after seeking legal opinion, besides complaining to the Congress high command.

Closed-door meet

Though it was termed a "courtesy visit", Mr. Kharge and Mr. Siddaramaiah had a closed-door meeting for nearly an hour during which political developments were discussed. Sources said that while Mr. Siddaramaiah wanted to meet the Congress president, the latter chose to meet the Chief Minister at his official residence as he was recuperating from a knee ailment. Mr. Kharge was accompanied by his son and Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge.

Fallout of issue

It is learnt that the two senior leaders discussed the honey-trapping issue, and its fallout on the party and the government's image, besides the possible widening of the rift in the party.

Increasingly, those within the party and the government feel that the statements made on the floor of the Legislative Assembly was nothing less than being "foolish" rather than a political strategy.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 6

CJI seeks details of guards at Justice Varma's house

Chief Justice of Delhi High Court forwards query to the police; judge asked not to dispose of his phones or delete or modify any conversation, message or data in them during the probe

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

With Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna seeking the ascertainment of details of security guards and personal security officers posted at the residence of Justice Yashwant Varma in the past six months, the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court, Justice D.K. Upadhyaya, has forwarded the query to the police.

The CJI had also called for the call details and the Internet Protocol Detail Record of Justice Varma's mobile phone after the alleged discovery of "sacks" of half-burnt currency notes from a storeroom on the residential premises of the High Court judge. The call details from September 1, 2024 have been handed over to the CJI in a pen drive. Justice Varma was asked not to dispose of his phones or delete or modify any conversation, message or data from them. The details of the High Court Registry staff deputed to Justice Varma were furnished to the CJI.

Photos published by the top court show the storeroom, firefighters, and burnt currency notes at the Delhi judge's residence. PTI

All these details will be placed by the Supreme Court before the probe committee. The three-member probe committee of the Chief Justices of two High Courts and a Karnataka High Court judge will take a deeper dive into the facts of the case. The Supreme Court's publication of documents and visual material related to the inquiry into the incident is a stride towards transparency even as the records raise questions which the three-member committee may examine.

For one, the published records show that the Police Commissioner got in touch with Chief Justice Upadhyaya only around 4.50 p.m. on March 15 when the fire had broken out around 11.30 p.m. the previous night. On receiving the information, Chief Justice Upadhyaya immediately swung into action.

The Delhi Police Commissioner's report to Chief Justice Upadhyaya said a security guard at the residence of Justice Varma saw "half-burnt articles" and debris being removed in the morning after the fire.

CONTINUED ON
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NEARBY

Bandipur night traffic ban: Govt. under pressure?

BENGALURU
An affidavit prepared by a senior Forest Department official favouring the continuation of the ban has become contentious and the State government is learnt to have asked for it to be reworked. » Page 6

Horatti says he is planning to quit

BELAGAVI
Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti told reporters in Hubballi on Sunday that he was considering resigning from his post due to the low quality of debates and increasing indiscipline in the legislature.

» Page 6

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 5

IPL rule changes — making it a level-playing field, giving bowlers the much-needed respite

BCCI's decision to lift the ban on saliva and the option of having a ball changed after the 10th over of the innings could have huge ramifications across the cricketing landscape; it's a welcome move from a board once reluctant to embrace change

RITU RAJ KONWAR

R. Kaushik

Spit and polish. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, that translates to 'extreme attention to cleanliness, orderliness, smartness of appearance, and ceremony often at the expense of operational efficiency'.

Spit and polish has been in vogue from time immemorial in the most literal sense of that term. Among other things, it remains the preferred mode of rendering black leather shoes, specifically, glossy and mirror-like. Film-watchers will recall, almost certainly with a smile, Amitabh Bachchan's iconic delivery from *Deewaar*. As a shoe-shining kid, he tells Iftekhar, *Main pheke hue paise nahi utathaa* (I don't pick up money thrown), an assertion he repeats years later to the same individual when he has metamorphosed into the celebrated angry young man.

Mohammed Shami isn't quite an angry young man, except occasionally when he has a cricket ball in hand, but if he stakes claim to the return of the spit-and-polish routine to cricket, he is well entitled to. Using spit, or saliva, to keep one side of the cricket ball shiny was in vogue from the time the sport was first played, until the exigencies of hygiene and safety in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic forced that practice to be halted in 2020 and outlawed by decree in 2022.

Dynamics of physics

The dynamics of physics dictate that conventional swing is procured in the direction opposite to where the shiny side is when the ball is released. That means for a right-arm pacer bowling to a right-hand batter, if the right side of the ball is the shinier one, generally that will result in a ball that swings away from the batter. Over time, through experimentation fair and foul, the bowling fraternity discovered reverse swing, where the ageing, older ball starts to swing in the direction of the shine because that side is heavier, thanks to the ample use of the saliva to polish the ball.

Over the last three years, the fast-bowling group has been short-shrifted by the ban on the use of saliva. The only natural resource then available to a fielding side is sweat, not quite a like-for-like replacement because it doesn't help keep the ball hard. As it is, smooth surfaces and lush outfields prevent the natural abrasiveness which is a huge prerequisite for 'reverse'. The unavailability of saliva to facilitate one of the more exciting bowling developments therefore came as a double whammy, taking one skilled component out of the game and allowing batters, already emboldened by excellent bats and shrinking boundaries, to target the best in the business with impunity, even in Test cricket where for long, the onus was on not getting out than scoring at a furious rate. So, what's all this got to do with Shami, you ask? For that, let's invoke the slightly distant past and a significantly more recent one.

The right-arm quick, originally from Amroha in Uttar Pradesh but whose cricketing birthplace is Kolkata, registered the best figures on Test debut by an Indian paceman some 11 and a half years back, in Sachin Tendulkar's penultimate game for the country. As a 23-year-old looking to make a name for himself, Shami couldn't have announced himself any more dramatically. Four for 71 in the first innings was backed up by five for 47 in the second at his adopted home, Eden Gardens, in the first of two Tests against an overmatched West Indies. Both efforts were marked by the deadly efficiency with which he used an older SG Test ball, which aids reverse-swing more than its counterparts used elsewhere in the world - Australia's Kookaburra and the English-made Dukes. You'd think nine for 118 would be good enough for the Player of the Match honours, but no, that went to Rohit Sharma, his future captain who marked his own debut with a subliminal 177 after walking in at 82 for four.

Unlike many other Indian quicks who arrived in a blaze of promise and faded away equally rapidly, Shami showed himself to be the real deal. Some four years after his debut, he welcomed Jasprit Bumrah into the Test side, in South Africa in January 2018, and Indian cricket hasn't been the same again.

Back to the recent past. And the Champions Trophy in Pakistan and Dubai, which India lifted a fortnight ago with a four-wicket defeat in the final of New Zealand. It was Shami's comeback to big-ticket cricket, an extension of his return to international action after more than 14 months spent recuperating from and rehabilitating after a heel surgery for an injury that had dogged him during the 50-over World Cup in late 2023.

Shami had proved his match-fitness with a handful of T20I and ODI outings against England in January-February and served notice in India's first Champions Trophy outing with a five-wicket haul against Bangladesh. He finished as the tournament's second-highest wicket-taker with nine scalps, the same as teammate Varun Chakravarthy and one behind Kiwi Matt Henry.

Quirky request

After taking three for 48 in the semifinal win over Australia, Shami was asked if he had been attempting to 'reverse' the ball. With a wry grin that is such a Shami trademark, he replied, "We try to get the ball to reverse. But you are not allowing the use of saliva. I am making an appeal to re-introduce the use of saliva, then the fun of reverse-swing will be back."

Shami's request found immediate favour from Vernon Philander, the former South African seam exponent, and Tim Southee, the former New Zealand captain and one of the more acknowledged practitioners of swing bowling. The International Cricket Council has been studiedly mum but the Board of Control for Cricket in India was quick to respond by announcing a return to the happy days when saliva was used for other purposes than merely littering the outfield.

After a meeting with the captains, coaches and managers of the ten franchises two days before the start of the season, the BCCI reintroduced the use of saliva for Season 18 of the Indian Premier League, which began on Saturday. Reverse-swing might not be a game-changer in a 20-over fixture, sure, but a start has been made in an apparent bid to level the playing field again and give the bowlers a ghost of a chance when it appears as if 300 in an IPL game is just days away. After all, the top five scores in the tournament, including a whopping 287, were all registered in the last 12 months.

The return of saliva isn't the only welcome news from a bowling perspective. The BCCI has also provided sides bowling second in a night game (7.30 p.m. start) with the option of asking for another (not a new) ball at any stage after the conclusion of the tenth over to offset the debilitating effect of the dew that completely takes the side defending a total out of the equation. Despite the immense technological advancements that have made space travel almost regulation (Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore will surely disagree), no satisfactory solution has been found for the dew that can make a cricket ball assume the characteristics of a bar of wet soap.

By encouraging fielding captains to summon a drier ball of similar wear and tear and augmenting it with the use of saliva, the BCCI has tried to empower bowlers of all ilk. Spinners will no longer baulk at the prospect of having to bowl towards the closing stages of the match because they will have better control when the ball leaves their hand, and because they can still hope for the ball to grip the surface even if the pitch is somewhat strewn with dew. The faster bowlers can aspire for - whether they get it is another matter - 'reverse', which in theory means target-hunts won't be as straightforward as they were in the last few years.

Traditionally, the Indian board and the cricketing fraternity has been reluctant to embrace change. It wasn't until the unexpected triumph in the World Cup in 1983 that India woke up to the possibilities of one-day cricket. India were also against the 20-over format (true that, we assure you) and almost coerced into playing the inaugural T20 World Cup in South Africa in 2007 so that they didn't risk their 2011 50-over World Cup co-host status. Mahendra Singh Dhoni's boys provided the perfect prelude to Season One of the IPL by bucking all odds to trigger the T20 mania that has reached epic proportions today.

But of late, the BCCI has been proactive when it comes to change. The Impact Player clause introduced in the IPL a couple of seasons back might not be the most judicious one, seeing as how it stymies the growth of the indigenous all-rounder, and has found few takers elsewhere. But the lifting of the ban on saliva and the potential to use a second ball in a T20 run-chase are developments that could have wider and more significant ramifications.

The ICC's Cricket Committee is currently headed by Sourav Ganguly, the former Indian skipper who was until recently the Director of Cricket at Delhi Capitals and is now the Director of Cricket for JSW Sports, making him the head of all cricketing properties owned by the entity, including the Delhi Capitals men's and women's teams. It shouldn't come as a surprise if Ganguly engages his Cricket Committee colleagues in a discussion on these fronts when they meet this week.

The widely held belief that spectators flock T20 matches as much to see themselves on the giant screens at the grounds as to savour fours and sixes might not be misplaced, but for once, the bowlers seem to be getting their due. How will these new tweaks work out? Watch this space.

THE GIST

- Using spit, or saliva, to keep one side of the cricket ball shiny was in vogue before the COVID-19 pandemic forced it to be halted in 2020 and outlawed by decree in 2022
- The return of saliva isn't the only welcome news from a bowling perspective. By encouraging fielding captains to summon a drier ball of similar wear and tear and augmenting it with the use of saliva, the BCCI has tried to empower bowlers of all ilk
- The widely held belief that spectators flock to T20 matches as much to see themselves on the giant screens at the grounds as to savour fours and sixes might not be misplaced, but for once, the bowlers seem to have something to play with

Chimp off the old block

Safe with mom: A baby monkey clinging on to its mother on a hot summer day near the Yoga Narasimha Swamy temple at Melkote in Pandavapura taluk of Mandya district. K. MURALI KUMAR

Demand for coffee cultivation grows after prices hit a record high

Coffee board warns that macro climate is crucial for cultivation and economic profit

K.C. Deepika
GONIKOPPA (KODAGU DIST.)

The record prices that coffee hit this year have spurred interest in its cultivation in newer destinations outside of the traditional coffee growing belt in Karnataka such as Kodagu and Chikkamagaluru.

Vishnu Ponnanna from Mookambika Nursery in Virajpet, Kodagu district, said while there is higher interest from H.D. Kote and Mysuru, from where there were queries earlier too, now, he is getting queries from Tumakuru, parts of Chitradurga, and even Hosur in Tamil Nadu.

Subhash Chandra from Ganapathy Nursery in Suntikoppa, North Kodagu, said he has received a large number of queries from Ballari, Davangere, Chitradurga, Tumakuru, Dharmapuri in Tamil Nadu, and Palakkad and Idukki in Kerala as well.

Coffee prices in India hit record prices this year buoyed by a fall in global production, especially in Brazil and Vietnam. At the same time, erratic climatic conditions in India, especially in Karnataka, have also resulted in reduced yield.

K.G. Jagadeesha, CEO and Secretary, Coffee Board of India, told *The Hindu* that the post-harvest estimate for last year is going on, but the final estimate may be around 3.45 lakh tonnes, which is a good yield.

"It was a successful year for farmers. There was 10-15% loss, which was caused by natural vagaries such as high temperature in the beginning of the year followed by heavy rainfall. But the prices doubled, so it offset this loss. In case of Arabica, the prices are double and for robusta, more than double," Mr. Jagadeesha explained.

Coffee prices in India saw a record high this year buoyed by a fall in global production, especially in Brazil and Vietnam. FILE PHOTO

> There was 10-15% loss, which was caused by natural vagaries such as high temperature in the beginning of the year followed by heavy rainfall. But the prices doubled, so it offset this loss. In case of Arabica, the prices are double and for robusta, more than double
>
> **K.G. JAGADEESHA,** CEO and Secretary, Coffee Board of India

He further said that as per the cumulative indicator price (ICO Composite Indicator Price, or I-CIP), which is an average of all categories, it was 167 cents/lb (pound) last year, and this year, it is 261 cents/lb.

"The base price itself was very high upon which we have grown. Robusta, which was 130 cents/lb, is now 223 cents/lb, and Arabica was 202 cents/lb, which is now 291 cents/lb," he added.

This year's forecast

"This year too, the forecast is good for growers," said Mr. Jagadeesha adding, "We have received some rains already and because of the good prices last year, planters have taken care of plants this year and done some irrigation by themselves as well. We will start the post-blossom estimate now. According to the experts, Brazil and Vietnam may not come back to their original production this year as well."

Mr. Jagadeesha warned non-coffee growing belts against getting carried away.

"We promote coffee where our scientific personnel recommend. We don't recommend any place that is sub-optimal or ideal. Some farmers are growing coffee by creating a microenvironment. In the long run, we don't know if it'll be profitable in that area," he said.

"When the coffee board recommends, it should be doable even for the average farmer. Coffee investment is for 30-40 years. So we can't base it on one or two special cases. Requests have come from Chitradurga, Uttara Kannada, and Shivamogga. Even 30-40 years ago, even in Kolar, people tried to grow but didn't succeed. Even at the coffee board (in Bengaluru), we have planted some coffee trees and we get berries once in a few years. It can be considered economically profitable only if there's income over a long period. To prove that, we go only when the macro climate indicators are ideal: average temperature, rainfall, etc. Coffee cannot be grown where elevation is less than 500 metres," he said.

In these areas, the temperature is higher than that in the Western Ghats, rainfall is lesser and there is no proper drainage in case of high rainfall in a short period. Shade is also very important, he further said.

"If a farmer has taken all this into account and is growing coffee, we are neutral; we won't discourage them. Coffee cultivation is deregulated, so anyone can grow coffee. We are not averse, but we won't recommend it unless we are confident that an average farmer can also grow it. These areas according to us are not suitable. If people are getting carried away by the high prices or one or two farmers want to grow it, they can do so at their own risk," said Mr. Jagadeesha.

'Drop location' method of selling drugs gaining popularity among peddlers

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Drug peddlers in the city, especially foreign nationals, are increasingly adopting the elusive "drop location" method to hoodwink enforcement agencies, sleuths from the Anti-Narcotics Wing of the Central Crime Branch (CCB), Bengaluru, have said.

The "drop location" method involves a peddler placing the narcotics consignment at a place, usually hidden from public view, sharing its photo and geolocation to the client over instant messaging apps, and taking the money online.

Peddlers usually choose a tree or a bench in a park and keep the drug parcel and click the photos and share the live location with the customer on WhatsApp.

On receiving the message, the customer will go to the spot and pick up the contraband and pay the peddler online. In this way they avoid suspicion and undue attention of the police.

The "dop location" method involves a peddler placing the narcotics consignment at a place, usually hidden from public view, sharing its photo and geolocation to the client over instant messaging apps, and taking money online.

Using this method, peddlers have been selling drugs to their clientele without ever coming into direct contact with them. Peddlers are also not caught in possession of the narcotics. Moreover, this pushes the entire operation online, posing serious challenges for enforcement, sources said.

For instance, Lakshminarayana K., police inspector, ANW, has filed a complaint with the CCB against a foreign national, who was found placing MDMA drug packets at a vacant site in Kengeri and sharing the drop location and photograph to his customers on WhatsApp.

The accused is said to be roaming around on a two-wheeler and peddling drugs using this method. Weeks after the complaint, he is yet to be nabbed.

"The communication for buying and inquiring about the drugs also takes place through WhatsApp calls and chats which is impossible for the police to track. The mode of payment is also online, making it tough for the police to establish the operation of the network," a senior police officer said.

The "drop location" method is not entirely new. In November 2021, the CCB busted a gang of five youths on the charge of peddling drugs through this method and recovered MDMA and ganja worth around ₹10 lakh.

BMTC to launch mobile service vans

The mobile vans will provide on-the-spot servicing for BMTC buses. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) will launch newly procured mobile service vans on Monday to enhance bus maintenance and improve service efficiency across the city.

The vehicles will be flagged off by Transport and Muzrai Minister Ramalinga Reddy at the BMTC Central Office in Shanthinagar.

The mobile vans will provide on-the-spot servicing for BMTC buses, reducing downtime, and ensuring smoother operations.

Currently, the BMTC operates a fleet of around 6,500 buses, including approximately 1,300 non-AC electric vehicles. Additionally, the corporation plans to lease 320 AC electric buses soon.

Ensuring proper maintenance of these vehicles is essential for uninterrupted service.

Gender disparity in India's judiciary highlighted at national consultaton

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Centre for Law and Policy Research (CLPR) hosted a national consultation titled 'Equal Justice: Securing Equal Inclusion of Women in the Higher Judiciary' on Saturday and Sunday at Sabha, Bengaluru.

The event brought together retired judges, legal professionals, scholars, and civil society representatives to confront systemic barriers impeding women's advancement in India's judiciary, where representation remains alarmingly low. Women currently account for just 14.42% of High Court judges and 6% of Supreme Court judges – only two out of 33 justices. Historically, a mere 11 of 279 Supreme Court judges (3.94%) have been women, with no female Chief Justice in 75 years. Justice B.V. Nagarathna is poised to shatter this ceiling in 2027, though her tenure will last only 36 days.

Participants at a national consultation hosted by Centre for Law and Policy Research in Bengaluru on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The consultation emphasised transparent judicial appointments and reforms to create a gender-inclusive judiciary, highlighting inter-sectional challenges faced by women from marginalised backgrounds. CLPR aims to catalyse legal and institutional shifts to bolster women's leadership in the judiciary.

The event commenced with a panel exploring the role of bar associations in promoting gender diversity in judicial leadership.

Prashanth Kumar, president of the Bar Association of India, shared his vision, stating: "I've seen women excel in top roles. I'll ensure half our State secretaries are women by leveraging mentoring programmes in criminal law and pushing institutional reforms."

Waste paper mart owner held for trying to mow down police on duty

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Magadi Road police on Saturday arrested a 33-year-old waste paper mart owner for allegedly trying to mow down police personnel who were conducting random vehicle checks for drunk driving on the service road of West of Chord Road last Monday.

The accused Mahadevaswamy Ramachari was on the run after injuring head constable Dharanappa, constable Karthik, and damaging their bike. The duo along with their senior Manjunath N.V. were on special duty to check vehicles, said the police.

When they tried to stop the vehicle driven by Mahadevaswamy, the accused drove past the barricades and stopped a few metres away abruptly.

The barricades and the bike were damaged in the melee. Dharanappa and Karthik went on a bike to question him, following which he allegedly tried to mow them down and sped away, said the police.

Based on a complaint by Manjunath, the Magadi Road police had registered a case against Mahadevaswamy charging him with attempt to murder, voluntarily causing hurt, assault or use of criminal force against public servant.

The police analysed the footage from various CCTV cameras in and around the area to identify the registration number of the car and tracked down the accused.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is given to all general public my **Mr.VARUN KUMAR B.T,** Aged about 26 years s/o. Sri. Tulasi ram **(AADHAAR No:9656 7923 9560) residing at No.16/15, 23rd main road, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru-560086,** have lost, The original registered will deed dated: 02-02-2011 which was registered as document No. CMP-3-00172-2010-11 pertaining to the **Site bearing No.3,** presently comes under the limits of B.B.M.P ward No.143 (Vishveshwarapuram Ward), bearing **BBMP Municipal No.3,** having **BBMP Khatha PID.No.50-76-3, bearing BBMP EPID No.1789137551** situated at **Sri Ramamandira road, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru,** measuring: **East to West 41 feet, North to South 22.5 feet** totally measuring **922.5 Square Feet.**To the same I have also lodged a online police complaint on **22/03/2025** before the Bengaluru city Police Unit bearing serial no. 1532853 and lost report No. 1532852/2025. If anybody finds the aforesaid original Will deed, may kindly return the said document immediately to my client or to me at the below mentioned address/call me on my number

Sd/-
M.Muralidhar
Jagadish.M
Advocate
No.63-88, C.M.Plaza, Jakkasandra, Kormangala 1st block, Sarjapura main road, Bengaluru:560034.
Mobile:9845002868
Bengaluru Date : 23-03-2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

We are undertaking a title investigation on the immovable properties more fully described in the **'Schedule'** hereto and hereinafter referred to as **'Schedule Properties'.** The said title due diligence is being conducted for and on behalf of our Client who is desirous of entering into a joint development transaction in relation to the Schedule Properties. The present owners of the Schedule Properties mentioned in the Schedule hereinbelow have represented to our Client that they own the Schedule Properties and have unrestricted rights of alienation over the same.

Notice is hereby given to the general public that any person/s other than the present owners, asserting any right, title, charge, lien, claim/s or any interest whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Properties are hereby called upon to submit to the undersigned, their claim/s, if any, over the Schedule Properties or submit their objections, if any, to the aforementioned transaction. The said claim/s or objections must be in writing, together with documentary proof to support such claim/s or objections, and must be delivered to us at the address given below within a period of **10 (Ten) days** from the date of publication of this Notice. If no such claim/s or objections are received, it shall be deemed that no one else other than the present owners has/have any right, title, interest or claim whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Properties and our Client would be at liberty to proceed with the said joint development transaction in connection with the Schedule Properties.

SCHEDULE

(Description of the Schedule Properties)

All that piece and parcel of the immovable properties being agricultural lands totally admeasuring 08 Acres 0.5 Guntas, situated at Hunasamaranahalli Village, Jala Hobli, Yelahanka Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, described in the table below:

Sl. No.	Survey No.	Extent	Boundaries		Present Owner
1	197/2	01 Acre 04 Guntas (Out of 01 Acre 04 Guntas, an extent of 9.5 Guntas has been acquired for widening of National Highway-44. Remaining extent of land available is 34.5 Guntas)	East by	National Highway – 44 and the land bearing Survey No. 197/3;	Mr. A. Paramashivaiah (son of Late Appajappa)
			West by	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 191/1, 191/2, 191/3, 190/5 & 192;	
			North by	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 197/7 & Survey No. 197/3; and	
			South by	Land bearing Survey No. 197/4.	
2	190/3	22 Guntas	East by	Land bearing Survey No. 190/4;	Mr. R. Venkatesh (son of Late Ramaswamy @ Ramaswamappa)
			West by	Land bearing Survey No. 178;	
			North by	Land bearing Survey No. 190/2; and	
			South by	Land bearing Survey No. 191/1.	
3	191/1	02 Acres 20 Guntas	East by	Land bearing Survey No. 197/2;	Mr. P. Gopal (son of Late L Puttaraju)
			West by	Land bearing Survey No. 179;	
			North by	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 190/3, 190/4 and 190/5; and	
			South by	Lands bearing Survey Nos. 189/8 and 191/3.	
4	191/2	01 Acre 28 Guntas	East by	Land bearing Survey No. 197/2;	Mr. P. Shankar (son of Late L. Puttaraju)
			West by	Land bearing Survey No. 189/1;	
			North by	Land bearing Survey No. 191/3; and	
			South by	Land bearing Survey No. 192.	
5	191/3	01 Acre 28 Guntas	East by	Land bearing Survey No. 197/2;	Mr. R. Venkatesh (son of Late Ramaswamy @ Ramaswamappa)
			West by	Land bearing Survey No. 189/8;	
			North by	Land bearing Survey No. 191/1; and	
			South by	Land bearing Survey No. 191/2.	
6	189/1	14 Guntas	East by	Land bearing Survey No. 191/2;	Mr. P. Shankar (son of Late L Puttaraju)
			West by	Land bearing Survey No. 179;	
			North by	Land bearing Survey No. 189/8; and	
			South by	Remaining Portion of the land bearing Survey No. 189.	
7	189/8	14 Guntas	East by	Land bearing Survey No. 191/3;	Mr. R. Venkatesh (son of Late Ramaswamy @ Ramaswamappa)
			West by	Land bearing Survey No. 179;	
			North by	Land bearing Survey No. 179 and portion of Survey No. 191/1; and	
			South by	Land bearing Survey No. 189/1.	

Sd/- Mr. Srinivas B.R.,
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Date: 24-03-2025
Place: Bangalore

Why do people get tattoos? Twin study says it's nurture, not nature

A new study from Denmark has found genetic differences have little to do with the decision of one of a pair of identical twins to get a tattoo. Researchers from a Korean university say that they have 'shown empirically that tattooing ... is a cultural phenomenon with little to no evidence of genetic influences'

D.P. Kasbekar

Why do some individuals get tattooed while others don't? Is it because of differences in their genes?

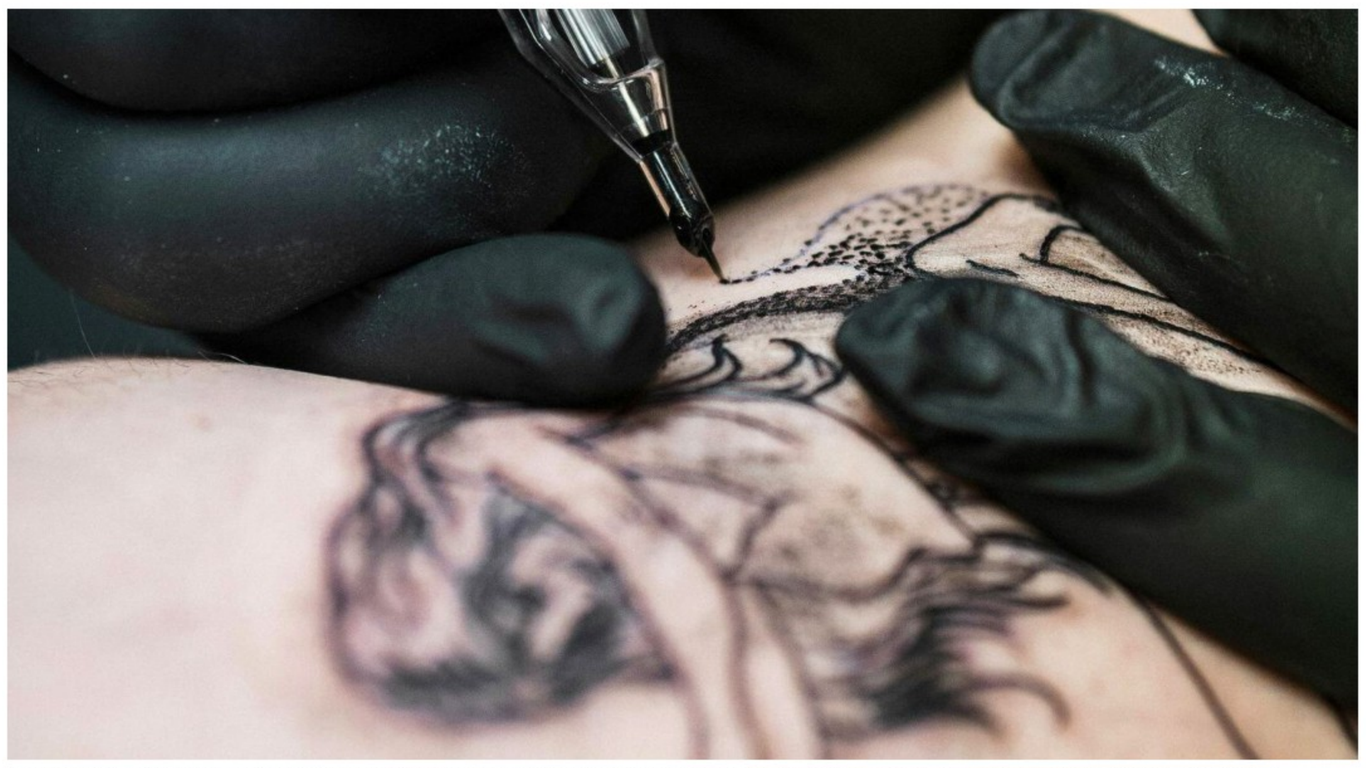
Researchers from the University of Southern Denmark in Odense recently addressed these questions. Their findings, reported in February in the journal *Behavior Genetics*, showed that differences in an individual's propensity to get tattooed were not due to nature but because of nurture.

'Nature' here refers to an intrinsic, genetically-determined predisposition that affects one's behaviour. 'Nurture' denotes extrinsic factors such as one's education, culture, family, and peers.

A tattoo is an indelible design registered on the skin by injecting inks and dyes into a skin layer called the dermis. There, the pigment particles become engulfed and subsequently kept in place by cells of the body's immune system, making them permanent.

In 1991, hikers stumbled on the naturally mummified remains of a man since named Ötzi the Iceman in northern Italy. Scientists found that he lived more than 5,000 years ago and had tattoos. Today, many sports and entertainment celebrities also sport tattoos – as do their fans, and indeed anyone who wishes to bear symbols they consider important or significant to themselves on their person.

Since adding any foreign substance to one's body is a health risk from a medical viewpoint, studying the long-term effects of tattooing on public health has been an important research focus.



If both members of a twin pair sport a tattoo or both don't, they are said to be concordant. But if one twin has a tattoo and the other doesn't, they are discordant. COLLINS LESULIE/UNSPLASH

Sorting nature from nurture

If two offspring are born from the same pregnancy, they are called twins. The offspring can be genetically identical or non-identical. Identical twins share all of their genes while non-identical twins share on average only 50% of their genes.

After the father's sperm fertilises the mother's egg, the unified cell that is formed is called the zygote. The zygote then develops into an embryo that in turn grows into the baby.

Sometimes two sperm can simultaneously fertilise two eggs to produce two zygotes, and the zygotes can go on to form non-identical twins. On the other hand, identical twins are formed when an embryo from a single zygote splits at an early stage to become two embryos, and each then grows to become a baby.

For this reason, identical twins are also known as monozygotic twins and non-identical twins are called dizygotic twins. Monozygotic twins are always of the same biological sex, whereas dizygotic twins – like any other pair of siblings – can be either of the same or of different sexes.

If both members of a twin pair sport a tattoo, they are further said to be concordant. They are also concordant if both don't. But if one twin has a tattoo and the other doesn't, they are said to be discordant.

The researchers behind the new study were curious as to whether there was a 'greater' concordance at work in monozygotic twins than in dizygotic twins of the same sex. Their search came up empty, i.e. there was no greater concordance, even despite the fact that monozygotic twins share twice as many genes as dizygotic ones.

The finding suggested that genetic differences have little, if anything, to do with an individual wanting to get tattooed.

Additional findings

The Danish Twin Register (DTR) is a database with details of more than 175,000 twins born between 1870 and 2009. The researchers mailed out a questionnaire to twins recorded in the DTR. They received responses from 4,790 individuals, including from both twins of 1,327 twin pairs.

Of these respondents, 1,058 (22%) were monozygotic, 3,501 (73%) were dizygotic, and the zygosity was unknown for 231 (4.8%). The researchers sorted the twins into three cohorts based on their birth years: oldest (1925-1960), middle (1961-1980), and youngest (1981-2004).

Since adding any foreign substance to one's body is a health risk from a medical viewpoint, studying the long-term effects of tattooing on public health has been an important research focus

Finally, the researchers asked the respondents if their co-twin also had a tattoo, about the tattoos' colours and sizes, and the age at which they were first tattooed. The responses revealed that 22% had at least one tattoo. In the 1,327 pairs for which both twins responded, the self-reported tattoo status matched the information provided by the co-twin in 98.5% of the cases.

The researchers reported a marked increase from the oldest to the youngest cohorts, from below 6% to above 30%, in terms of the propensity for getting a tattoo. Evidently tattooing has become increasingly popular in recent times.

The researchers also asked the respondents about their lifestyle factors such as education, smoking, amount of physical exercise, and alcohol consumption. They could correlate tattooing strongly only with smoking. But they also acknowledged limitations in their ability to correlate with alcohol consumption and exercise "because the age at first tattoo and age at which the questionnaire was answered may vary up to several decades".

More concordance for some defects

In 2021, researchers from the Seoul National University College of Medicine in South Korea reported in the journal *BJOG* the concordance rates for several different birth defects found in 3,386 monozygotic and dizygotic twin pairs born between 2001 and 2019.

Birth defects affecting the nervous system, the circulatory system, cleft lip/palate, and the urinary system were found to be significantly more concordant in monozygotic than in dizygotic twins. The implication was that aberrant biological development in these systems is primarily due to one's genes.

On the other hand, the concordance rates did not significantly differ for malformations of the eye, ear, face or neck, the genital organs, and the musculoskeletal system, meaning that for these disorders, extrinsic aspects of the uterine environment, such as maternal nutrition, physiology, smoking, and infections, played a more significant role.

The researchers ended their paper writing: "we have shown empirically that tattooing ... is a cultural phenomenon with little to no evidence for genetic influences."

(D. P. Kasbekar is a retired scientist.kasbekardp@yahoo.co.in)

THE GIST

Identical twins are known as monozygotic, and non-identical twins are called dizygotic. Monozygotic twins are always of the same biological sex, whereas dizygotic twins can be either of the same or of different sexes

Researchers wanted to know if there was a 'greater' concordance at work in monozygotic than in dizygotic twins of the same sex. Their search came up empty

Researchers studied concordance rates for birth defects. Those affecting the nervous, circulatory, cleft lip/palate, and urinary systems were found to be more concordant in monozygotic than dizygotic. The implication was that aberrant development is primarily due to genes

BIG SHOT

Indonesia's Lewotobi Laki-laki volcano spewed ash clouds more than 8 km high when it erupted late on March 20. Local authorities raised the alert status to the highest level while an Australian airline cancelled some flights into Bali last week. The eruption, in East Nusa Tenggara province, followed dozens of smaller ones since March 13. REUTERS

WHAT IS IT?

Lapis lazuli: earth's best blues

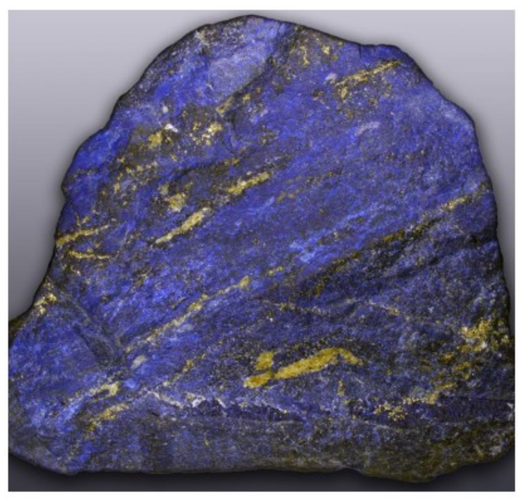
Vasudevan Mukunth

Lapis lazuli is a vividly blue rock, sometimes with streaks of gold, that has been known for millennia for its eye-popping colour and use as a semi-precious gemstone.

It gets its colour from the presence of an unusual mineral called lazurite (25-40%). Its blueness depends on the amount and structure of sulphur in this mineral. The presence of calcite can reduce the blueness while the golden sparkle comes from the presence of pyrites. Some other minerals, like diopside and sodalite, are present in smaller quantities.

Lapis lazuli has been found in many countries so far, including Chile, Russia, and the US, but the highest quality rock comes from Afghanistan's Badakhshan province, where people have been mining it for more than 6,000 years.

In ancient times, traders in India imported lapis lazuli from Badakhshan, perhaps as long ago as 1000 BC. Archaeologists have also found ornamental lapis lazuli ornaments in the remains of Indus Civilisation sites including Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. The ancient Egyptians were also known to use it to make jewellery and to powder it to use as eye shadow.



A section of lapis lazuli rock with pyrite mined in Afghanistan in January 2008. HANNES GROBE (CC BY-SA 2.5)

In the Renaissance period, artistes in Europe ground lapis lazuli down into ultramarine, an expensive pigment they used in their paintings. The rock gets its name from two languages: lapis is the Latin for 'stone' whereas 'lazuli' comes from the Persian word lazhward, meaning 'blue.'

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BMRCL on track to finalise feasibility study report by July

Officials have confirmed that the study is currently being conducted across eight key corridors, recently announced by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the State Budget

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) is on track to finalise its extensive 197-km feasibility study by July 2025 and submit it to the Karnataka government for evaluation. Officials have confirmed that the feasibility study is currently being conducted across eight key corridors, including an extension of the Airport Line to Devanahalli, which was recently announced by Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the State Budget.

If sanctioned, this expansion would considerably increase the city's metro network, taking its total length to nearly 350 km in the coming years. FILE PHOTO

Beyond city limits

Most of the eight new corridors being considered involve extending Namma Metro beyond city limits to Harohalli in Kanakapura taluk, Bidadi in Ramanagara district, Devanahalli in Bengaluru rural taluk, and even Tumakuru, championed by multiple ministers in the Congress government in the State, to benefit the areas they represent, but faced by strong objection from the opposition BJP. Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar has been advocating for the extension of the Namma Metro to Bidadi and Kanakapura, arguing that the move would spur industrial growth. Similarly, Karnataka Home Minister G. Parameshwara has been pushing for the Metro network to be extended to Tumakuru. Devanahalli, to where the state budget announced extending Namma Metro to, is represented by senior Congress leader and Food and Civil Supplies Minister K. H. Muniyappa.

However, city BJP MPs Tejasvi Surya and P.C. Mohan have argued that Namma Metro should be limited to the city limits, as it is an expensive option and areas outside the city could be served by suburban rail and circular rail. The 287-km circular rail network, at an estimated cost of ₹23,000 crore is designed to connect key regions on the city's periphery, including Devanahalli, Doddaballapur, and Malur, thereby enhancing overall mobility.

Proposed Namma Metro stretches under feasibility study

- Challaghatta to Bidadi (Ramanagara district) **15 km**
- Silk Institute to Harohalli (Kanakapura) **24 km**
- Kalena Agrahara – Bannerghatta National Park – Jigani – Anekal – Attibele – Sarjapur – Varthur – Kadugodi Tree Park **68 km**
- Bommasandra to Attibele **11 km**
- Madavara to Tumakuru **52.41 km**
- Kadabgere to Tavarakere **6 km** (extension of Magadi Road line under Phase-3)
- Doddajala to Devanahalli (Airport Line extension) **6 km**
- K.R. Pura to Hoskote **15 km**

Feasibility study

The study encompasses multiple proposed metro corridors across the region. One of the planned extensions runs from Challaghatta to Bidadi in Ramanagara district, covering a distance of 15 km. Another stretch, extending 24 km, will connect Silk Institute to Harohalli along Kanakapura Road.

A significant 68-km corridor will span Kalena Agrahara, Bannerghatta National Park, Jigani, Anekal, Attibele, Sarjapur, Varthur, and Kadugodi Tree Park.

The feasibility study also includes an 11-km link between Bommasandra and Attibele and a substantial 52.41-km connection from Madavara to Tumakuru. Additionally, a 6-km extension from Kadabgere to Tavarakere, part of the Magadi Road line under Phase 3, is under review. Another proposed segment will extend from Doddajala to Devanahalli, covering 6 km as part of the Airport Line. Finally, a 15-km stretch linking K.R. Puram to Hoskote is also being examined.

> The feasibility study is an extensive exercise, incorporating vital components such as traffic flow assessments, station location planning, cost evaluation, and sustainability considerations
> **A SENIOR BMRCL OFFICIAL**

If sanctioned, this expansion would considerably increase the city's metro network, taking its total length to nearly 350 km in the coming years.

Following this, the government will decide on the routes to be approved, with officials anticipating that approximately 50 per cent–around 95 km to 100 km–of the proposed network will be selected for development.

"The feasibility study is an extensive exercise, incorporating vital components such as traffic flow assessments, station location planning, cost evaluation, and sustainability considerations. Our goal is to ensure that the expansion meets Bengaluru's long-term mobility needs while improving commuter convenience and efficiency," said a senior BMRCL official.

BMRCL officials emphasised that completing the feasibility study is just the initial phase.

"Once the study is submitted, the state government will scrutinise the findings and decide on the routes that will advance to the detailed project report (DPR) stage. Subsequent steps will include land acquisition, environmental approvals, comprehensive engineering surveys, and financial planning before moving toward actual construction and implementation," a BMRCL official explained.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, MAR. 24	
RISE 06:21	SET 18:31
RISE 02:09	SET 13:42
TUESDAY, MAR. 25	
RISE 06:20	SET 18:31
RISE 03:00	SET 14:40
WEDNESDAY, MAR. 26	
RISE 06:20	SET 18:31
RISE 03:48	SET 15:39

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	32	24
Mysuru	35	21
Bengaluru	33	23

Bengaluru Today
33°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusty winds to occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
33°C The weather will be dry. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant.

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THE HINDU
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First shower cripples city's infrastructure

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The first rainfall of the year on Saturday exposed the chinks in Bengaluru's civic armour as several roads were flooded and drains overflowed along with incidents of tree-fall, including the one which killed a three-year-old girl, and power cuts reported in many areas.

According to the data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Bengaluru city received 11.8 mm rainfall while Bengaluru KIAL station recorded 38.6 mm rainfall with thunderstorm on Saturday.

The effect of the rain spilled over to Sunday morning too, as fallen trees obstructed traffic movement in areas like Koramangala and J.C. Road. The Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) cleared the tree that fell onto the road to restore traffic movement on J.C. Road. There was also some flooding at the Central Silk Board bus stop.

A view of a flooded street following the rain on Saturday evening in Bengaluru. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The data from the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) stated a total of 25 trees and 75 branches fell on Saturday across eight zones. In the Yelahanka zone which received up to 50 mm of rainfall, there were 12 fallen trees with 40 fallen branches.

Further, there was flooding on many major roads, including the airport road which faced severe traffic congestion. Kogilu Cross, Ramamurthy Nagar, Kasturi Nagar, K.R. Puram, Outer Ring Road, Hebbal, and Veerannapalya are some of the areas where severe flooding was reported. A few subways in the city were also flooded, including the one at Sahakar Nagar and so was Kogilu junction.

Despite a gap of several months before the last rain of 2024 and the first rain of this year, citizens questioned why the BBMP was still under-prepared to handle the rainfall in the city. As the BBMP got into action on Sunday morning, clearing shoulder drains, a social media user said, "BBMP should have been ready. These small steps could have brought bigger differences."

Replying to a post about BTP staff clearing the drains on Hebbal flyover, another social media user said, "BBMP should have done this in January - February. But they never do this at all."

Rainfall in Bengaluru has become synonymous with power cuts. Even on Saturday, several areas like Hebbal, Basaveshwara Nagar, BTM Layout, HSR Layout, Kadubeesanahalli, Vyalikaval faced power cuts lasting anywhere between two and seven hours. Many also complained that 1912, the helpline number of Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (Bescom), was not reachable.

"As there were rains everywhere in the city, we received over 78,500 calls yesterday on the helpline number. While we received 33,277 calls, 45,308 calls were abandoned due to the high number of calls. A total of 21,126 complaints were registered," said a Bescom official.

Temple chariot tragedy: 16-year-old girl succumbs to injuries

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The death toll in the temple chariot tragedy at Rayasandra has risen to two, as 16-year-old Jyothi, who was injured in the incident, succumbed to her injuries early on Sunday. Lohith, 24, a resident of Huskur village, died on Saturday. Two others injured are said to be out of danger.

According to the police, Jyothi was watching the procession sitting in an autorickshaw, when the 100-feet-high chariot headed for Madduramma temple crashed on to the vehicle. While others who had been standing around her ran for cover, Jyothi could not escape as she was trapped inside the autorickshaw.

Two chariots - of 111 feet and 100 feet height - were being drawn towards Madduramma temple on Saturday. While one chariot toppled near Chikka Nagamangala damaging several vehicles, another toppled at Rayasandra, Parappana Agrahara, when it was raining heavily.

A case has been registered against the temple fair organisers for causing death due to negligence. A preliminary investigation said gusty winds and heavy rains led to the mishap. Those who were holding the ropes tied to the chariots couldn't control them.

The underlying issue had been the unscientific structure of the chariots, the police said. The police have summoned the organisers for questioning.

Villagers were keen on continuing with the temple fair on Sunday as well, taking out processions of similarly tall chariots. However, the police did not allow any further processions on Sunday, sources said.

Speakers at career guidance seminar urge students to pursue passion without fear

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a bid to empower commerce students with clarity on their career choices, Transcend Group of Institutions in association with *The Hindu* in School hosted a career guidance seminar on Sunday at the Transcend Auditorium in Yelachenahalli. The session, attended by students from various PU colleges and schools along with their parents, featured insightful addresses by experts who highlighted emerging opportunities in commerce streams.

Manojkumar Kolla, Deputy Director of School Education (Pre-University), Bangalore South, and K.T. Siddharth, chairman of Transcend Group of Institutions, during the session at Transcend Group of Institutions, Yelachanahalli in Bengaluru on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Sharing his journey of civil services and competitive examinations, Manojkumar Kolla, Deputy Director of School Education (Pre-University), Bangalore South, reflected on the importance of life skills, decision-making, and planning in achieving success.

"Success comes to those who make the right decisions at the right time. Anyone can succeed with the right timing, hard work, and dedication, regardless of their background and qualifications. Remember that competition always lies at the bottom of the ladder," he said, advising students to compare themselves to their past rather than others.

Highlighting the role of newspapers in shaping young minds, Mr. Kolla said, "I have great admiration for newspapers like *The Hindu*. It shaped my childhood and student life, contributing to my academic experiences. Reading newspapers improves vocabulary, communication, and knowledge of current affairs."

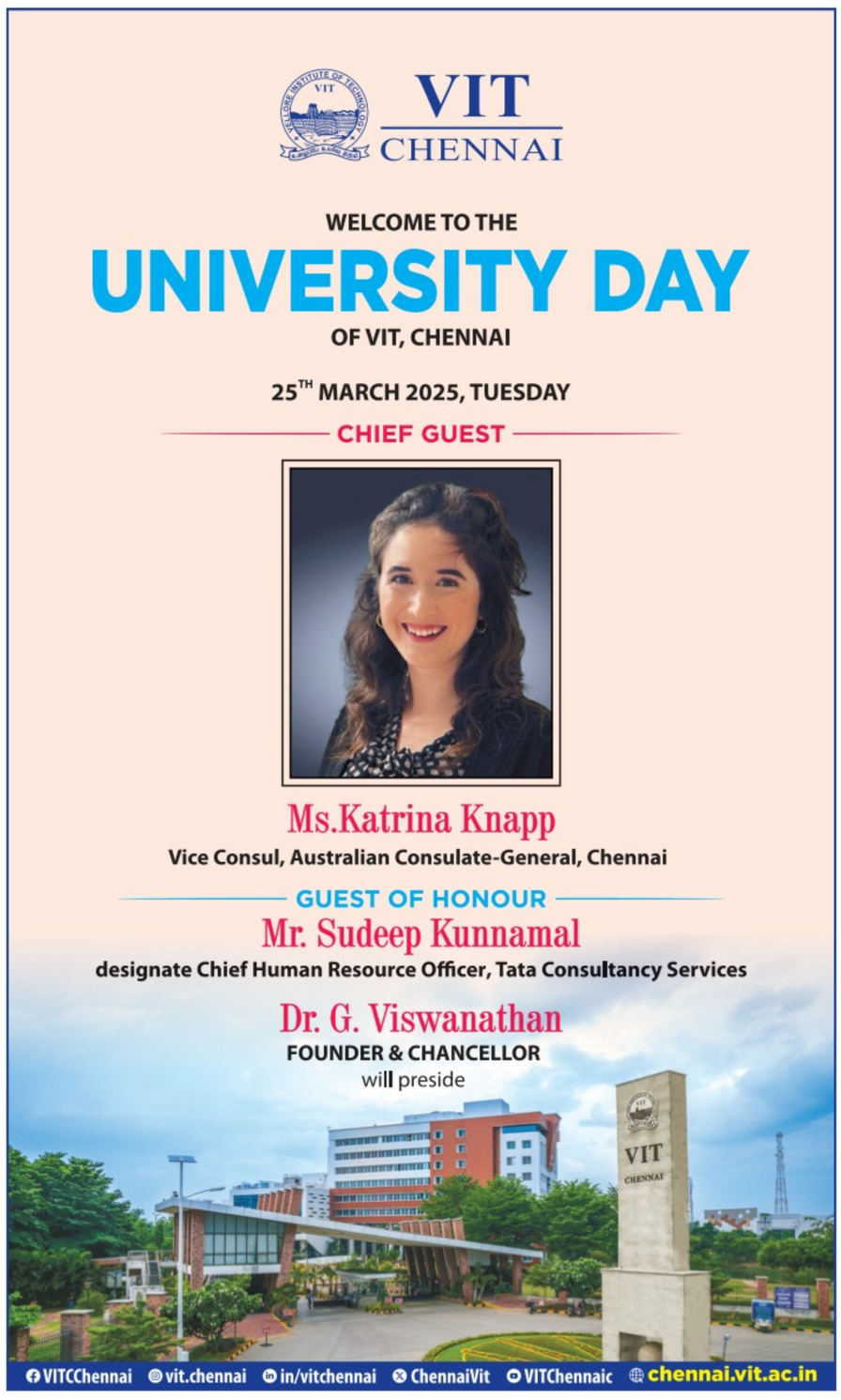
K.T. Siddharth, chairman of Transcend Group of Institutions, who delivered the keynote address, advised students to think in terms of "so" when addressing shortcomings rather than justifying them with "because" to foster a mindset of continuous improvement.

"Explore various domains through certification courses in platforms like Coursera, Udemy, and Career Ninja, and upskill yourself with Toastmaster clubs," he shared.

He stressed the importance of industry readiness being valuable.

The interactive session between the panel and the students and the parents, highlighted the importance of starting the habit of reading newspaper from a young age emphasising the role of schools and parents in the process.

Students also spoke about their dilemma while choosing a career owing to parental pressure. A student shared his parents' suggestion to gain corporate knowledge before pursuing his passion for teaching. To this, the panellists responded by encouraging students to pursue their passions without fear and not see obstacles as setbacks.



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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Number of Palestinians killed in the Gaza Strip so far

50,021 Israeli strikes across the southern Gaza Strip killed at least 26 Palestinians overnight into Sunday, including a Hamas political leader. Residents said tanks had advanced into an area of the southern city of Rafah. AP

Taxes paid by the domestic alcohol beverage industry

3 In ₹ lakh crore. Domestic manufacturers of premium liquor, competing against imported brands in Delhi, hope that the new government will provide a level-playing field, opening the gates to the availability of the choicest of local spirits in the capital. They said that this suits the "Make in India" vision. PTI

The margin by which the U.K. is to cut costs of running the govt.

15 In per cent. The U.K. plans to cut costs within four years as it grapples with strained public finances. It would translate to annual savings of £2.2 billion ($2.8 billion) across Britain's civil service, which employs more than 5,00,000 people. They are not to borrow to fund day-to-day spending. AFP

Venezuelans flown from U.S. to maximum security prison

200 Relatives of Venezuelan migrants sent by the U.S. to a Salvadoran prison protested in Saturday for their release. Venezuelans were flown from the U.S. to El Salvador, after President Donald Trump invoked wartime powers to expel alleged gang members. AFP

Number of fatalities in Russia's drone attack against Ukraine

7 Russia launched 147 drones across Ukraine, according to the Ukrainian Air Force. Ukrainian air defences shot down 97 and 25 others didn't reach targets due to Ukrainian countermeasures. The attack came ahead of ceasefire negotiations in Saudi Arabia. AP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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The complex struggle for 'Kurdistan'

Even though fragmented by local struggles for power between different tribes, the Zagros range of mountains that form the heartland of a hypothetical Kurdistan, home to Kurds of different identities, is rich with history

WORLD INSIGHT

Vighnesh P. Venkitesh

The story of the Kurdish people is as complex as their existence. A traditionally nomadic society spread across modern day Turkiye, Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Armenia, the Kurdish people have been moving around for more than a century in search for Kurdistan – a state which has been imagined by its people ever since the concept of a 'nation state' trickled down from the West to the Ottoman empire.

Kurdish societies were spread across the Ottoman empire, and never managed to unite under a single identity like the Armenians and the Turks. Therefore, they were unable to make a claim for a separate state, as European powers moved in to carve out the region after the First World War, rendering them stateless in modern geopolitics.

Modern-day nationalist sentiments, especially in Turkiye, tend to take away the authenticity of Kurdish people. Bulent Arinc, former Deputy Prime Minister of Turkiye, had reportedly said "Kurdish is a language without a civilisation" while he was speaker of the parliament in 2012. The underlying theme in Turkish resentment towards the Kurds is visible in this statement: Kurds are a people without a history.

The struggle to become a people

Even though fragmented by local struggles for power between different tribes, the Zagros range of mountains that form the heartland of a hypothetical Kurdistan, home to Kurds of different identities – majorly Sunni Muslims, few Shia Kurds, and some Alevi tribes (not to be confused with Alawites of Syria) – is rich with history. The Ottoman rule at its height saw the Kurds as a powerful ally against neighbouring Persia. They went from being nomads to soldiers to tribes and at one point even had their own emirates. But Ottoman efforts to modernise rule and centralise power saw the emirates go back to being divided small tribes.

However, the Treaty of Sevres, signed on August 2, 1920, did bring the Kurdish people closer to statehood than ever before and ever since. The Treaty, largely drafted by Britain, said that a commission composed of Allied appointees would "Draft within six months….a scheme of local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish areas lying east of the Euphrates". "…No objection shall be raised by the Principal Allied Powers to the voluntary adhesion to such an independent Kurdish state of the Kurds inhabiting the part of Kurdistan which was hitherto been included in the Mosul Vilayet [parts of British occupied Mesopotamia]", the treaty had said.

But the Kurds failed to capitalise on the treaty. They were unable to unite under a single identity due to their tribal composition. The tribal chiefs were faced with two options – to form a state that would probably come under British influence and risk detaching from Muslim Ottoman heartlands that they had occupied for a long time or remain stateless. Many tribal chiefs chose the latter.

The Turkish republic, born after the First World War, had its roots in the nationalist idea of a homogenous society and was driven by the fear of external threats affecting national unity. While the Ottoman government in Istanbul had signed the Treaty of Sevres, it had not ratified it. And it did not survive to implement it. The loss of Mesopotamia and Syria, the entry of the French and the invasion of Istanbul by the Greeks all led to the revolt in Anatolia led by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk which resulted in the Turkish state in 1923.

A distant dream: An Iraqi Kurdish woman waves a flag of Kurdistan during the Nowruz New Year festival in the town of Akre, on March 20. AFP

While the Kurds fought against Armenian and Greek threats alongside Kemal hoping for a Muslim state, the Ataturk (meaning father of the Turks) had clear intentions of establishing a nation-state. Kemal abolished the Sultanate in 1922 and the Caliphate in 1924, the two pillars of the Muslim state, rendering the spiritual base from which the Kurdish Aghas and Sheiks derived their authority, obsolete. A peace treaty finalised in July 1923, following a conference in Lusanne, rejected the British request to recognise Kurds as a national minority. Kurdish associations, publications, religious fraternities, and schools were all banned.

But this setback to the Kurdish identity only served to strengthen the people's resolve to unite different Kurdish viewpoints. The threat to the Aghas (tribal chiefs) and Sheiks paved way for a loosely connected organisation called Azadi. But a brief mutiny of its troops led to the leadership being rounded up and brought its end in 1924. Another short-lived Kurdish revolt broke out in February 1925, in the Diyarbakir region led by Naqshbandi Sheikh Said. But this revolt was confined to Zaza-speaking Sunni Kurds. The remaining Sunni groups remained indifferent to the cause with some Alevi Kurds even assisting the authorities.

The revolt failed to seize Diyarbakir and collapsed due to the fragmented nature of the Kurds. It also had a disastrous aftermath. It led to widespread suppression of the Kurds and gave Kemal the pretext for a one-party state. Thousands were killed and countless Kurdish villages were razed to the ground.

Another revolt in 1928, this time in the Mount Ararat region lasted till 1930, and Turkiye had to insist that Iran cede territory on its side of the Ararat to encircle the region. This revolt was also pacified with great brutality, with security forces being given a free hand without consequences. The brutal repression silenced the Kurdish resistance for decades, and the region of Kurdistan remained a military zone closed to foreigners till 1966.

A revival of the movement

The authoritarian one-party system in Turkiye was relaxed in 1946, and opposition parties, like the Democrat party, saw opportunity in the Kurds and began trying to woo the Aghas, reviving Kurdish identity.

Conscription and mechanisation of agriculture led to the rise of a Kurdish proletariat. It was among this class that the Kurdish revival gained momentum. The young Kurds picked up by the state for assimilation began to propagate the problems of the 'East', a euphemism used for Kurdistan. The rise of the Kurdish proletariat saw demonstrations and expressions in the press to which the state replied by crackdowns and seizure of publications. But interconnected organisations carried the Kurdish movement forward, mixed with left politics.

This period is marked by several polarities. The political left against right, nationalist Kurds against Turks, religious Sunnis against Shias, Sunnis against Alavis and Sunnis against secularists. The growing polarity led to Kurds, despairing even the Turkish left, forming their own left-wing parties, among them the Partiya Karkari Kurdistan or the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) under Abdullah Ochalan, which would define the Kurdish struggle for decades.

The emergence of the PKK

The PKK adopted a Marxist-Leninist doctrine and induced it with a guerrilla campaign. Their main targets were the fascist right, Turkish left, state agents, and, above all, Kurdish landlords who worked in tandem with the state to exploit the Kurdish masses. While the Kurdish masses were initially shocked by the PKK's violence, the increasingly degrading treatment they endured at the hands of the state, including military sweeps, arbitrary arrests, and widespread torture made them receptive to the PKK.

The PKK managed to grow beyond the borders of Turkiye with its allies, like the Democratic Union Party (PYD) in Syria, the Free Life of Kurdistan Party (PJAK) in Iran, and the Kurdistan Democratic Solution Party (PCDK) in Iraq. The Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK) serves as an umbrella organisation for all the groups and the People's Protection Units (YPG), formed in 2012 during the Syrian civil war, serves as the armed wing for the cause.

International dynamics

While Turkiye, the U.S. and the European Union designates the PKK as a terrorist organisation, it has an ally in Russia. "Neither PKK nor the PYD are considered terrorist organisations by either Russia or the United Nations Security Council", then-Russian Ambassador to Turkiye, Andrey Karlov, had said in 2015. The PKK had received training and material support through Soviet proxies and even after the fall of the Soviet Union, the PKK had held a congress in Moscow in 1996.

While Kurdish identity was forever in conflict with the Turkish state, things were different in neighbouring nations. Iraq's new Constitution that came into effect in 2005, following the U.S. invasion and fall of Saddam Hussein, recognised the semi-autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan under a federal structure. Occupying northern Iraq, including the oil-rich Kirkuk, Iraqi Kurdistan prospered and held a referendum of independence in 2017 with overwhelming Kurdish support. However, the referendum triggered a military response from the Iraqi government which retook regions, including Kirkuk, in a significant blow to Kurdistan aspirations.

In Syria, the PYD and YPG utilised the Syrian civil war to carve out a de facto autonomous region for the Kurds, Rojava, run by the Democratic Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria. The U.S., in the fight against the ISIS, lent assistance to the YPG to form the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), which Turkiye sees as a threat due to its links with the PKK. Following the fall of the Assad regime in Syria, the interim government led by former militant Abu Muhammad al-Jolani managed to convince the SDF to lay down arms and integrate into the state, leaving questions over the future of Rojava. And recently, on March 1, the PKK declared a ceasefire with Turkiye. Since this declaration, by Mr. Ochalan to the PKK to lay down its arms and dissolve the organisation, the future of Kurdistan is uncertain.

THE GIST

- Kurdish societies were spread across the Ottoman empire, and never managed to unite under a single identity like the Armenians and the Turks.
- While the Kurds fought against Armenian and Greek threats alongside Kemal hoping for a Muslim state, the Ataturk (meaning father of the Turks) had clear intentions of establishing a nation-state. Kemal abolished the Sultanate in 1922 and the Caliphate in 1924, the two pillars of the Muslim state, rendering the spiritual base from which the Kurdish Aghas and Sheiks derived their authority.
- Conscription and mechanisation of agriculture led to the rise of a Kurdish proletariat. It was among this class that the Kurdish revival gained momentum.

Questions raised over relocation of forest dwellers in Kali Tiger Reserve

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Activists have called for a detailed inquiry into the relocation exercise and found it ironic that it was being bandied about as a model across the country. FILE PHOTO

The relocation of forest dwellers taken up by the Forest Department in Kali Tiger Reserve and Dandeli Wildlife Sanctuary has come under the scrutiny of wildlife activists who have questioned its legality.

Ironically, a written reply to an unstarred question in the Legislative Council provided by the Minister for Forest Ecology and Environment Eshwar B. Khandre on March 17 has formed the basis for the complaint raised by a activist.

In a complaint written to the authorities, including the Forest Minister, B. Reshma from Mangaluru pointed out that on March 17, a question was raised by Shantharam Siddi, MLC, regarding the rehabilitation of forest dwellers from the protected areas of Karnataka. Mr. Khandre provided a detailed written reply with statistics and minutes of the district-level committees on rehabilitation.

Accordingly, 498 families have been rehabilitated from Kali Tiger Reserve between 2020-25, of which about 248 families are from buffer areas.

This, the complainant, said is in blatant violation of section 1.4 of the guidelines of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), which notes that forest-dwelling tribes from core/critical areas only are eligible for rehabilitation.

A scrutiny of the list of villages from where the families have been relocated also indicates that many of them were from different villages and had encroached the forest land and have been compensated through rehabilitation, alleged the activist.

The minutes of the district-level meetings conducted before the rehabilitation clearly indicate that the officials had red-flagged forest encroachment by many families.

The attention of Mr. Khandre was also drawn to his reply to another question raised by S. Ravi, MLC, on March 10 about providing an alternative village to the people of Kurimande and Sambhapura villages of Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary.

But in reply, the Minister has said that both the villages are illegal as they have encroached upon the forests, and there was no provision under the law to provide alternative land. Hence, the complainant wondered as to how illegal encroachers in Kali were compensated.

E-paper edition

The Hindu offers more coverage of Bengaluru in the e-paper edition. (epaper.thehindu.com)

In the issue dated March 24, we have a story on Nature Conservation Foundation's Nature Classrooms, a space where people can feel free to come, share their work, collaborate, network and give nature education a voice. Now in its 10th edition, this monthly event is a nature educators' meet-up, an initiative to link everyday learning and education to the natural world.

Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (March 24, Monday), the following articles are available:

- The complex struggle for 'Kurdistan' **newsth.live/kurdsnomadexp**
- Why do people get tattoos? Twin study says it's nurture, not nature **newsth.live/tattoos**

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access an article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

Karnataka government departments owe Escoms ₹8,690 crore

The highest amount of ₹4,541.21 crore is owed to the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company

Given the financial state of the Escoms, experts say that it is essential for government departments to clear their dues as soon as possible. FILE PHOTO

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

By the end of this January, arrears owed by various government departments to Karnataka's electricity supply companies (Escoms) stand at a whopping ₹8,690.19 crore, according to data provided by the Energy Department recently.

The highest amount of ₹4,541.21 crore is owed to the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (Bescom), followed by ₹1,505.17 crore owed to the Hubli Electricity Supply Company (Hescom). The Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company (Gescom) is owed ₹1,316.42 crore, the Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Company (Cesc) ₹764.22 crore, the Mangaluru Electricity Supply Company (Mescom) ₹542.01 crore, and the Hukkeri Rural Electric Cooperative Society is owed ₹21.16 crore.

What govt. departments owe as of January 2025

Escom	Pending dues
Bescom	*4,541.21
Hescom	1,505.17
Gescom	1,316.42
Cesc	764.22
Mescom	542.01
Hukkeri Rural Electric Cooperative Society	21.16
Total	8,690.19

*₹ in crore

In March 2024, Bescom was owed ₹6,840 crore and the outstanding dues have reduced by ₹2,299 crore between then and January 2025.

In December 2024, Energy Minister K.J. George revealed that Bescom was owed ₹2,095.74 crore just from public drinking water units and streetlight systems until October 31 of that year.

After serving multiple notices to such offices, the power utility had begun disconnecting power to long-time government defaulters. Bescom officials had said that while causing inconvenience to the public was not something they wanted to do, they were left with no choice but to cut off the power supply.

Speaking in the Legislative Council recently, Mr. George also said that the escoms have the right to cut off electricity supply to government offices which fail to pay the bills even after a 15-day notice is served.

> Karnataka's power sector is collapsing and it will suffer further unless its health is guarded by the government
>
> **M.G. PRABHAKAR,** Former advisory member, KERC

"However, keeping in mind the welfare of the general public, we have not cut off power supply to government hospitals which provide emergency services, schools and colleges, police stations, courts, and drinking water units. We are going ahead with disconnection of power supply to other government departments for non-payment of bills and arrears," he explained.

He added that letters have also been written to various government departments to pay the dues.

Given the financial state of the escoms, experts say that it is essential for departments to clear their dues as soon as possible.

"With the exception of Mescom, all the other escoms are experiencing losses to the tune of ₹39,000 crore. Karnataka's power sector is collapsing and it will suffer further unless its health is guarded by the government. If the recovery of these dues does not happen now, it will never happen," said M.G. Prabhakar, former advisory member, KERC.

BBMP appeals for support to recover tax dues, amidst Opposition criticism

Property tax collection as of March 22

Demand		Recovery		Balance	
Number of properties	*Amount	Number of properties	Amount	Number of properties	Amount
20,57,814	3,830.55	17,08,801	3,674.12	3,49,013	156.43

*This includes only property tax and cess, not penalty and interest

*Amount in ₹crore

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Close on the heels of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) terming the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) moves to recover property tax dues as being worse than "microfinance firms", the city's civic body on Sunday appealed for "moral support" from citizens to recover pending property tax dues.

In the recently concluded legislature session, C.K. Ramamurthy, Jayanagar BJP MLA, said properties were being auctioned for meagre tax dues such as ₹8,000. Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok said that the government was levying a penalty of 100% along with 15% interest, calling it "meter baddi", an exploitative process of lending at high rates.

Munish Moudgil, Special Commissioner (Revenue), BBMP, said that of the 20.5 lakh property owners, 3.49 lakh had not paid their property tax. "Out of these 3.49 lakh owners, 1.73 lakh are chronic defaulters, and 1.76 lakh are current year defaulters. In total they owe ₹390 crore to the BBMP," he said.

He further said that 1.73 lakh chronic defaulters hadn't paid property tax in many years and all measures to make them pay had failed. "All notices, SMSes, IVRS calls, personal calls, attachment notices have failed to make them pay. They have not even used the one-time settlement (OTS) scheme rolled out by the BBMP for tax defaulters in 2024. They are deliberate defaulters," he said.

"Letting such defaulters go is totally unfair to honest taxpayers. Anyone speaking for these 10% chronic defaulters are standing against 90% honest taxpayers and against public interest. The BBMP is clear and determined to collect the property tax as per law," Mr. Moudgil said.

The BBMP has been on a special drive to recover property tax dues from 2024.

It launched the OTS scheme for tax dues in February 2024 and extended it multiple times till November 30, 2024. The BBMP again opened an OTS window till March 31, 2025, only for government buildings.

For those 3.49 lakh properties with outstanding dues, the BBMP has initiated several measures including provisional attachment of properties (81,644 properties were attached in January, 2025 alone) and auctioning off properties (of the 608 listed for auction in February, owners of 555 cleared their dues).

Red sandalwood and other items illegally sold at handicraft shops seized in Mysuru

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

The Forest Mobile Squad seized red sandalwood and sandalwood items from handicraft shops in the city recently. The squad launched a raid and found four handicraft shops illegally selling chips, powder, and bits of red sandalwood and sandalwood on their premises. The shops, selling silk sarees and handicraft items, were also illegally selling the sandalwood and red sandalwood items. According to a statement, two separate teams, headed by Deputy Forest Conservator Chandrashekar Gowda Patil and Assistant Forest Conservator Rudresh C., raided four shops.

During the raid, they recovered 249 bits of sandalwood weighing 15.83 kg, 537 bits of red sandalwood weighing 25.90 kg, 4.60 kg of sandalwood powder, 730 grams of sandalwood chips, and 5.20 kg of red sandalwood powder.

Cases had been booked under the provisions of the Karnataka Forest Act, 1963, against all four shops.

The officials said that the Forest Department does not give a licence for the private sale of sandalwood bits, chips, powder, or oil to anybody.

Hence, the general public who intends to purchase these items should do so from the sandalwood depot at Aranya Bhavan in Ashokapuram in Mysuru.

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Through KPP portal only)

BWSSB invites Tenders from eligible contractors for the following Works:

Office of the Chief Engineer (D&QA), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K. G. Road, Bangalore-09.

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount Put to Tender / EMD Amount	Last Date & Time for submission of tender	Date & Time for opening of tender
1.	DC&BM	BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/4062/2024-25 Dt: 18/02/2025	Rs.16,62,438/- / Rs.33,500/-	07-04-2025 upto 4.00 p.m.	08-04-2025 after 4.00 p.m.
2.		BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/4060/2024-25 Dt: 18/02/2025	Rs.19,91,830/- / Rs.49,800/-		
3.		BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/4064/2024-25 Dt: 18/02/2025	Rs.48,72,316/- / Rs.97,500/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (DC&BM).

Office of the Chief Engineer (South), 7th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K. G. Road, Bangalore-09.

4.	South-1	BWSSB/EES-1/AE/TO/4367/2024-25 Dt: 17/03/2025	Rs.87,73,939/- / Rs.1,75,500/-	07-04-2025 upto 4.00 p.m.	09-04-2025 after 4.00 p.m.
5.		BWSSB/EES-1/TO/AE/4370/2024-25 Dt: 17/03/2025	Rs.14,05,927/- / Rs.14,500/-	01-04-2025 upto 4.00 p.m.	03-04-2025 after 4.00 p.m.

Sd/- Executive Engineer (South)-1.

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/AAPL/RO5845/24-25

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **ABDUL** Salam Khadar, s/o: Abdul Kadar, r/o: No–40/48, 1st Cross, Lingappa Block, H.D Devegowda Road, R. T Nagar, Bangalore–560032, Have Changed My Name As Abdul Salam Kottaprath Meenoth. Vide Afdvt Dtd On 21/03/2025

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Mrs. P.G. BHARATHI,** W/o Mr. M.N. Ravi, age 55 years, R/at Sri Appaji, No. 238, 4th Cross, 4th Main, Near Avalahalli BDA Park, Avalahalli BDA Extension, BSK 3rd Stage, Bengaluru-85 do hereby declare that all the names i.e. **P.G. BHARATHI, BHARATHI P.G** and **BHARATHI RAVI** are one and the same and refers to me only, henceforth I shall be known and called as **P.G. BHARATHI** for all practical purposes, vide affidavit dated 21-03-2025, sworn before Advocate and Notary **R.S. VIJAY** at Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **PARAMESWARAPPA**, S/o Channappa, age 56 years, R/at No. 63 and 64, Suparva, 1st Cross, North Face, Balaji Layout, Vidyaranyapura, Bengaluru-560 097 do hereby declare that all the names i.e. **PARAMESWARAPPA, PARAMESWARAPPA C** and **C PARAMESWARAPPA** are one and the same and refers to me only, henceforth I shall be known and called as **C PARAMESWARAPPA** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 21st March 2025, sworn before Advocate and Notary **G. HEMALATHA** at Bangalore.

Karnataka Urban Water Supply & Drainage Board

O/o The Chief Engineer, Jalabhavan, #P-4, 10th main, 3rd cross, 3rd floor, Saraswathipuram, Mysuru-09, Ph No: 0821- 2545894, **Email:**kwbcemys2014@gmail.com.

Short Term Tender Notification

Tender for the work of Providing and laying HDPE water supply pipeline and U-PVC sewer line along Kanakapura road, NH-209 in Malavalli town (including 1 year DLP) (Lumpsum tender – no variation) **was invited - Indent No. KUWSDB/2024-25/WS/WORK_INDENT327.**
For details - https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, K.U.W.S. & D BOARD, Mysuru.

DIPR-DD-MYS/1480/KSMCA-1107/2024-25

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ

ಸಹಾಯಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಚೇರಿ, ವಿಜಯಪುರ ಉಪ ವಿಭಾಗ, ವಿಜಯಪುರ

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಬಿ1/ಬಜೆಟ್/ವಿಜೆಪಿ/ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ/ಟೆಂಡರ್/2024–25

ದಿನಾಂಕ:25.02.2025

ಸಂಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

2025–26 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಜಯಪುರ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ವಿಭಾಗೀಯ ಕಛೇರಿ ಮತ್ತು ವಿಭಾಗದ ವಲಯ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ ಕಛೇರಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಡಾಟಾ ಎಂಟ್ರಿ ಆಪರೇಟರ್, ವಾಹನ ಚಾಲಕ ಹಾಗೂ ರಾತ್ರಿ/ಹಗಲು ಕಾವಲುಗಾರರ ಕೆಲಸ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಲು ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಸೇವೆಯ ಪೂರೈಸಲು ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: KFD/2024-25/SE0934 ರಂತೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ. ದಿನಾಂಕ: 25.03.2025 ರ ವರೆಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಹಾಕುವ ಮತ್ತು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 27.03.2025 ರಂದು ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಟೆಕ್ನಿಕಲ್ ಮತ್ತು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 28.03.2025 ರಂದು ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಫೈನಾನ್ಸಿಯಲ್ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು. ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ದಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲಿಚ್ಚಿಸುವವರು kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ನಿಬಂಧನೆ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/–

ಸಹಾಯಕ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ, ವಿಜಯಪುರ ಉಪ ವಿಭಾಗ, ವಿಜಯಪುರ

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/782/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2024–25

PUBLIC NOTICE

We, bring to the notice of General Public at large that, our client i.e., **Smt. M. Chaithra Kishore Kumar,** W/o B.K.Kishore Kumar, R/at No.99 Bhuvaneswari Nilaya, Bannerghatta Road, Near govt school, Basavanapura, Gottigere, Bengaluru south, Bengaluru-560083, intends to purchase the below stated schedule properties from the land owners i.e.,

1) Mr.John.K.P, S/o, Mr.K.J.Paulose, **2) Mr. Binu. P. Sunny,** S/o,Mr.Sunny Abraham, **3) Mrs. Reena Elizabeth George,** S/o, Mr.Suraj Mathew, **4) Mrs. Mary Antony,** W/o, Mr.Binoy Mathunni, **5) Mr. Sajeev Antony** S/o, Mr.Antony Paul, **6) Mr. Eby. K. Kakkooran,** S/o, Mr.K.P.Kuriakose **7) Mrs, Meera Eby,** W/o, Mr.Eby. K. Kakkooran, **9) Mr. Ajai Kumar. K P,** S/o, Mr.K.P.Peter, **10) Mrs. Tejimol Jose,** W/o, Mr. Ajai Kumar. K P, **11) Mr. Anil Biji Thomas,** S/o, Mr.Thomas Thenalil, all the properties have been carved out in Sy No.42/1 measuring 1 acre and Sy No.42/2, Measuring **30 Guntas (totally 1 acre 30 guntas),** situated at **Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, Bengaluru.**

Any Person having any rights, title, interest or claims or disputes over the schedule properties by way of sale/alienations, inheritance, succession, possession, mortgage, lien, charge or any pending litigations or otherwise, having objections over the alienation of the schedule properties shall write the same in writing along with reliable documents thereof to the above said address or the address of the Advocate mentioned below, ***within 15 days*** from the date of publication of this notice. Any objections filed without valid proof of documents or within the stipulated period, the same shall be discarded/abandoned and our clients will proceed with the negotiation and conclude the said sale transaction.

SCHEDULE PROPERTIES

Item No.1:- All that piece and parcel of **immovable properties bearing Sy No.42/1 measuring 1 acre and Sy No.42/2, Measuring 30 Guntas (totally 1 acre 30 guntas), situated at Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk,** and bounded on- **East By:** Land belongs to Bande Muniswamy, **West By:** Land belongs to Guruva Venkataswamy, **North By:** Land belongs to Nallathimmaiah, **South By:** Government Road,

Item No.2:- All that piece and parcel of **immovable property bearing site No.7,** Old assessment Katha No.42/1 & 42/2, new assessment katha No.7/42/1 & 42/2, **situated at Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, measuring East to West 60 Ft and North to South 40 Ft, totally measuring 2400 Sq Ft.** and bounded on:- **East by:** Road, **West by :** Private Property, **North by:** Site No.8, **South by:** Site No.6.

Item No.3:- All that piece and parcel of **immovable property bearing site No.20,** Old assessment Katha No.42/1 & 42/2, new assessment katha No.20/42/1 & 42/2, **situated at Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, measuring East to West 58 Ft on northern side and 55 feet on southern side and North to South 40 Ft, totally measuring 2260 Sq Ft.** and bounded on:- **East by :** Private Property, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Site No.19, **South by:** Site No.21.

Item No.4:- All that piece and parcel of **immovable property bearing site No.17,** Old assessment Katha No.42/1 & 42/2, new assessment katha No.17/42/1 & 42/2, **situated at Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, measuring East to West 60 Ft and North to South 40 Ft, totally measuring 2400 Sq Ft.** and bounded on:- **East by:** Private Property, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Site No.16, **South by:** Site No.18.

Item No.5:- All that piece and parcel of **immovable property bearing site No.18,** Old assessment Katha No.42/1 & 42/2, new assessment katha No.18/42/1 & 42/2, **situated at Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, measuring East to West 65 Ft on northern side and 61 feet on the southern side and North to South 40 Ft, totally measuring 2520 Sq Ft.** and bounded on:- **East by:** Private Property, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Site No.17, **South by:** Site No.19.

Item No.6:- All that piece and parcel of **immovable property bearing site No.19,** Old assessment Katha No.42/1 & 42/2, new assessment katha No.19/42/1 & 42/2, **situated at Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, measuring East to West 61 Ft on northern side and 58 feet on the southern side and North to South 40 Ft, totally measuring 2380 Sq Ft.** and bounded on:- **East by:** Private Property, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Site No.18, **South by:** Site No.20.

Item No.7:- All that piece and parcel of **immovable property bearing site No.8,** Old assessment Katha No.42/1 & 42/2, new assessment katha No.8/42/1 & 42/2, **situated at Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, measuring East to West 60 Ft and North to South 40 Ft, totally measuring 2400 Sq Ft.** and bounded on:- **East by:** Road, **West by:** Private Property, **North by:** Site No.9, **South by:** Site No.7.

Item No.8:- All that piece and parcel of **immovable property bearing site No.23,** Old assessment Katha No.42/1 & 42/2, new assessment katha No.23/42/1 & 42/2, **situated at Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, measuring East to West 51.6 ft on the northern side and 50 Feet on the southern side and North to South 30 Ft, totally measuring 1522 Sq Ft.** and bounded on:- **East by:** Private Property, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Site No.22, **South by:** Site No.24.

Item No.9:- All that piece and parcel of **immovable property bearing site No.24,** Old assessment Katha No.42/1 & 42/2, new assessment katha No.24/42/1 & 42/2, **situated at Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, measuring East to West 50 on the northern side and 45.9 Feet on the southern side and North to South 30 Ft, totally measuring 1436 Sq Ft.** and bounded on:- **East by:** Private Property, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Site No.23, **South by:** Site No.25.

Item No.10:- All that piece and parcel of **immovable property bearing site No.6,** Old assessment Katha No.42/1 & 42/2, new assessment katha No.6/42/1 & 42/2, **situated at Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, measuring East to West 60 Ft and North to South 40 Ft, totally measuring 2400 Sq Ft.** and bounded on:- **East by:** Road, **West by:** Private Property, **North by:** Site No.7, **South by:** Site No.5.

Item No.11:- All that piece and parcel of **immovable property bearing site No.26,** Old assessment Katha No.42/1 & 42/2, new assessment katha No.611/26/42/1 & 42/2, **situated at Vittasandra Village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, measuring East to West 43ft on the northern side and 40 Feet on the southern side and North to South 35 Ft, totally measuring 1349 Sq Ft.** and bounded on:- **East by:** Private Property, **West by:** Road, **North by:** Site No.25, **South by:** Road.

Sri. Chethan.V, Advocate
Office Address **"HMP LAW ASSOCIATES",** No.1, 4th Cross, NGR Layout, Roopenaagrahara, Bommanahalli, Bengaluru-560068. Mobile No.9538993847.

CACHE

Facing the heat: Protesters gather outside of a Manhattan Tesla dealership to demonstrate against Tesla CEO Elon Musk in New York on March 22. AFP

Why are Tesla owners being doxxed in an online campaign against Elon Musk?

A website known as Dogequest came up with an interactive map which displays Tesla owners' names, addresses, and phone numbers. The operators of the website claim they will only remove this information if the owners can provide proof that they have sold their vehicles

John Xavier

A website known as 'Dogequest' has sparked outrage and concerns about privacy and security by allegedly publishing personal information of Tesla owners across the U.S. The website, which surfaced amid a growing wave of anti-Elon Musk sentiment, features an interactive map that displays Tesla owners' names, addresses, and phone numbers. Per a report by media outlet *404 Media,* the site's use of a Molotov cocktail as its cursor has only added to the controversy, with critics calling it an incitement to violence. At the time of filing this story, the Dogequest website was down.

The operators of the website claim they will only remove the information of Tesla owners from their platform if the owners can provide proof that they have sold their vehicles, the media outlet noted. This stark demand has raised serious questions about the safety of individuals targeted by the site, especially as it comes at a time when Tesla properties have increasingly become the focus of attacks.

What is Dogequest?

Dogequest describes itself as an anonymous platform designed to empower Tesla protesters. The site includes a searchable database of Tesla owners across the U.S., alongside the locations of the EV maker's dealerships and charging stations. In a highly disturbing twist, it also lists the addresses of employees from the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), an agency associated with Tesla CEO Elon Musk.

The website's data accuracy has been questioned. Some of the individuals listed on the platform are confirmed to be Tesla owners, but many locations plotted on the interactive map do not seem to correspond to real-world addresses, calling into question the veracity of the information provided, the outlet noted. Some critics have suggested that the website might not have access to accurate data, further complicating the situation.

One section of Dogequest openly encourages vandalism, saying: "If you're on the hunt for a Tesla to unleash your artistic flair with a spray can, just step outside – no map needed!" It goes on to state: "At DOGEQUEST, we believe in empowering creative expressions of protest that you can execute from the comfort of your own home." Such language has many concerned about the potential for violence, especially given the platform's connection to the rising tide of anti-Tesla activism.

How has Mr. Musk responded?

Mr. Musk wasted no time in responding to the site. In a post on X, he condemned the actions of Dogequest, calling it "extreme domestic terrorism." Mr. Musk's words reflect the growing tension surrounding both his company and his personal political affiliations. "Encouraging destruction of Teslas throughout the country is extreme domestic terrorism," he said, adding that the website was just one part of an alarming trend of hostility toward his company.

Dogequest gained significant attention in the wake of a series of violent attacks targeting Tesla properties across the U.S. According to a report by *Newsweek*, five Tesla vehicles were set on fire at a service centre in Las Vegas by an individual wielding Molotov cocktails. The word "RESIST" was spray-painted on the front door of the facility, suggesting that the attack was part of a larger political statement against Mr. Musk and his company. Further incidents followed. In Kansas City, two Tesla Cybertrucks were set ablaze, while in South Carolina, an arsonist attempting to torch a Tesla charging station ended up accidentally setting himself on fire. The FBI is now investigating these incidents, and federal officials have classified these attacks as acts of domestic terrorism.

The attacks on Tesla properties appear to be part of a larger wave of protest against Mr. Musk's ties with U.S. President Donald Trump. Mr. Musk's outspoken political stances, particularly his support for government spending cuts, have inflamed tensions, especially with activists and federal employees. These political controversies have only deepened the backlash against both Mr. Musk and his company, culminating in protests outside Tesla showrooms and the emergence of websites like Dogequest.

In New York City, for instance, around 250 protesters gathered outside a Tesla showroom, chanting slogans like "Musk Must Go" and "Block Fascism Now." While most of the protestors engaged in peaceful demonstrations, five were arrested for disorderly conduct, and one faces charges of resisting arrest.

Tesla has not only been targeted by activists but also by some of its own investors. Ross Gerber, an early investor in Tesla, publicly criticised Mr. Musk's involvement in politics, arguing that his actions have hurt the company's reputation. "It's time for somebody to run Tesla," Mr. Gerber said in a recent interview with *Sky News*. "The business has been neglected for too long. There are too many important things Tesla is doing, so either Elon should come back to Tesla and be the CEO of Tesla and give up his other jobs or he should focus on the government and keep doing what he is doing but find a suitable CEO of Tesla."

This growing hostility has also had a tangible impact on Tesla's stock market performance. Reports indicate that Tesla's shares have dropped more than 50% since the fall election, reflecting the broader backlash against Musk's leadership and the mounting political controversy surrounding the company.

What's next for Tesla and Dogequest?

As Dogequest gains more attention, concerns about the safety of Tesla owners and the potential legal consequences for those behind the site continue to mount. The FBI and cybersecurity experts are now working to investigate the origins of the website and the accuracy of the information it has published. Law enforcement agencies are also looking into the possibility of legal action against the site's operators for their role in potentially inciting violence.

For Tesla owners whose information has been exposed, the situation is tense. They are being urged to monitor their personal data closely and report any suspicious activity to authorities. Meanwhile, Tesla has ramped up efforts to secure its properties and protect its employees from further attacks, even as the company faces growing public scrutiny.

Whether or not the site's operators will face legal consequences remains unclear. However, Dogequest has undeniably added a new and troubling layer to the already complex controversy surrounding Tesla, its CEO, and the political divisions surrounding the company. As the situation continues to unfold, it remains to be seen whether Tesla will be able to regain its footing or if the mounting protests and cyber harassment will mark the beginning of a new chapter in the company's turbulent history.

THE DAILY QUIZ

A quiz on events that happened over the years on March 24

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
In 1721, which famous composer dedicated six concertos to Margrave Christian Ludwig of Brandenburg-Schwedt, which is now called the Brandenburg Concertos?

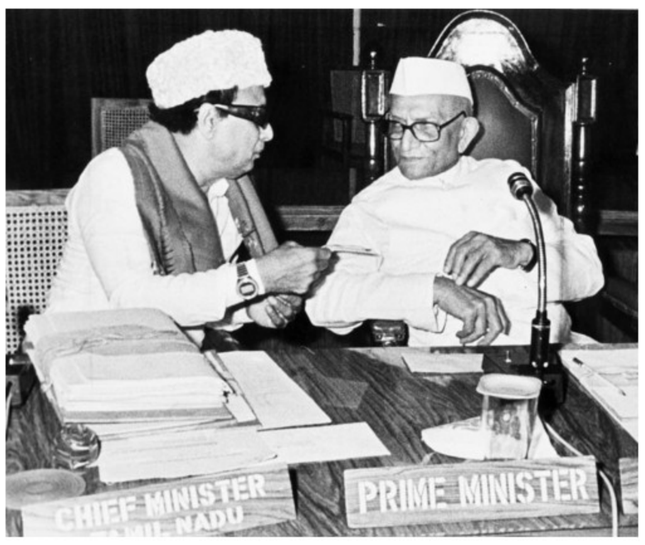
QUESTION 2
Name the last and longest reigning monarch of the House of Tudor who passed away on this date in 1603.

QUESTION 3
The World Health Organization observes March 24 as what day?

QUESTION 4
Which Asian kingdom officially became a democracy on this date with the conduct of its first ever general election?

QUESTION 5
The daring escape by some Allied Prisoners of War from the German camp Stalag Luft III that began on this date in 1944 was dramatised in which film?

QUESTION 6
Which of the famous 'Trinity of Carnatic Music' was said to have been born on this date?



Visual question:
Identify the Bharat Ratna, seen with another Bharat Ratna MGR, and how did he make news on this date 48 years ago? THE HINDU PHOTO ARCHIVES

Questions and Answers to the March 21 edition of the daily quiz:

1. This umpire has stood as an on-field umpire in the last six consecutive finals. **Ans: Nitin Menon**
2. These two umpires have stood as on-field umpires in most number of matches in IPL. **Ans: Anil Chaudhary and S. Ravi. 131 matches each**
3. This person officiated as match referee in most IPL finals. **Ans: J. Srinath**
4. This overseas player has won the most IPL titles. **Ans: Kieron Pollard, 5 with Mumbai Indians**
5. This overseas player has won the IPL title playing for two franchises. **Ans: Shane Watson, in 2008 playing for Rajasthan Royals, and in 2018 with Chennai Super Kings**
6. This player has played for the most number of teams in IPL history. **Ans: Aaron Finch, nine different franchises**
7. This Indian has played for the most number of teams in IPL history. **Ans: Jaydev Unadkat, eight different franchises**
8. The only player to have won the Player of the Final award despite ending up on the losing side. **Ans: Anil Kumble in 2009**
9. The only player to have won both Orange Cap and Emerging Player of the Year award in the same edition of IPL. **Ans: Ruturaj Gaikwad in 2021**

Visual: This is the only player to have won both Purple Cap and Player of the Series award in the same edition of IPL. **Ans: Harshal Patel in 2021**

Early Birds: Arjun Debnath| Mohan Lal Patel| Arun Kumar Singh

FROM THE ARCHIVES

I think the company is downsizing

I just hope they don't end up dumbsizing as we have two new projects to complete

S. Upendran

What is the difference between 'downsize' and 'dumbsize'?

This is a question a lot of people in the United States are asking Elon Musk. Is he planning to downsize the workforce in the federal government or is he planning to dumbsize it? People working in private organisations know what 'downsizing' is, and it is not surprising therefore, they dread the word. When you 'downsize', you reduce the number of people who are on your payroll; you achieve this either by laying people off or by firing them. Companies usually downsize for a number of reasons.

If our sales don't pick up, we might have to downsize our workforce.

The word is also used in everyday contexts to mean to move from a big house into a smaller house/apartment. The place where you are staying has become too big for you; perhaps, all your children have moved to another city, and therefore, you don't need a four-bedroom house. You would like to move into something more manageable. Sometimes, people are forced to downsize because they wish to save money.

You should seriously consider downsizing. At your age, the two of you don't need such a big house.

After his business collapsed, Rajesh was forced to downsize. He moved into a studio apartment.

The word 'dumbsize' is a combination of 'downsize' and 'dumb'. Extreme downsizing can be called 'dumbsizing'. In this case, in order to downsize, you very stupidly or 'dumbly' let go of too many of your workers. As a result of this excessive downsizing, there isn't sufficient manpower for the company to operate effectively.

My stupid boss has dumbsized our company.

Is it okay to say 'fair something out'? (K. Tarun, Kanpur)

The expression brings back memories of my school days; this was one of the favourite expressions of every teacher. When someone asks you to 'fair something out', what the person would like you to do is to write the final version of a document; a document that you may have corrected several times. The final version will be legibly written and incorporate all the suggested changes. Native speakers of English do not say, 'fair something out'. The expressions they prefer to use are 'make a fair copy' and 'make a copy'.

The children wanted to make a fair copy of the play they'd written.

upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Recuperate:
regain or make up for; regain a former condition after a financial loss; restore to good health or strength; get over an illness or shock

Synonym: recover

Usage: *Her mother took a long time to recuperate from the operation.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/recuperatepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ɹɪˈk(j)uːpəˌɹeɪt/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

EDUCATIONPLUS

Need for quality checks

What is required is a metric to evaluate constructive research contribution, rather than going by the citation index

Subhajit Ghosh

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Today, the performance of faculty members in most academic institutes, especially in Engineering, is being judged by their research output. However, this begs certain pressing questions.

Why is so much thrust being put on the 'research' component for career advancement when a large number of institutions do not have a sound research infrastructure, unlike some premier government-funded tech institutes? Why is it not sufficient if faculty focus on imparting skills to students through innovative teaching and lab-related work, along with additional responsibilities such as mentoring and career guidance?

Of course, with rapid developments and changes in technology, faculty members have to upgrade their knowledge to help students learn and evolve.

Key yardstick

As of now, there are not too many effective guidelines to assess a researcher's true potential. A key yardstick of assessment is the citation index.

Many institutes have been rewarding faculty researchers based on their citation index, which translates to having a good citation score in indexing sites such as *Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, Research Gate*, and others. This system is a catalyst to some faculty researchers producing quantitative research and even being mentioned as the top 1% or 2% researchers in a list by a top-ranking world institute.

Evaluating research contributions through citations can be erroneous. Assume that a researcher makes a crazy claim and writes a number of bad research papers. It is obvious that an avalanche of criticism from expert researchers in the area will follow. This will enable the researcher to become one of the most cited researchers with a good citation index. The moot question is: how do we evaluate what is 'good' and what is a 'less acceptable' research. There are additional issues of ghost writing of research papers and the problem of predatory journals.

There have been instances of researchers routinely flaunting their Google citation count and h-indexes of their research on social media, which are higher than the citation count of few internationally-acclaimed Indian researchers.

It would be a stretch of imagination to conclude that such researchers are superior than the international-acclaimed ones. One can always come up with a counter-argument as to why not?

Need for constructive evaluation

The objective is not to belittle researchers having an impressive citation count. As outlined earlier, high citation count can arise out of not-so-great research. It can also increase when researchers form a group and keep referencing each other within the group, often with little reason. Many universities/institutes have started rewarding researchers based on the number of index papers and citation counts in the absence of a more comprehensive measure for qualitative research.

Unless we develop a good enough metric to evaluate constructive research contribution, it will be difficult to bring ethical practices in academic publications in most institutions.

There is a need for the people at the helm of policy-making committees in these institutions to ponder over and stem the flow of a large number of publications with insignificant contributions, written merely to increase the count number.

The writer is a Professor of Computer Science and Engineering with three decades of experience and based in the National Capital Region. Email: professor.sghosh@gmail.com

SCHOLARSHIPS

IDRBT Summer Internship Programme
Provided by the Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT)
Eligibility: Open to students in the penultimate year of PG or Management programmes or a four-year Engineering degree course in a recognised institution
Rewards: ₹12,500 monthly
Application: Email isip@idrbt.ac.in
Deadline: April 15
www.b4s.in/edge/IDSI1

Flipkart Foundation Scholarship
An initiative from Flipkart Group to support children of those who own small grocery stores
Eligibility: Students in the first year of a professional STEM UG course at a government college who have scored at least 60% in Class 12 and whose one parent is a *kirana* store owner. Annual family income should not exceed ₹500,000.
Rewards: ₹50,000
Application: Online
Deadline: April 16
www.b4s.in/edge/FLIP1

University of Sheffield International UG Merit Scholarship
Offered by the University of Sheffield, the U.K.
Eligibility: Open to students who are citizens of India and have received an offer to pursue full-time UG course at the institution and have secured 60% marks or more in the previous academic year and are classified as a self-funded student for tuition fee purposes
Rewards: £10,000 annual
Application: Online
Deadline: April 22
www.b4s.in/edge/UGMS1

Courtesy: Buddy4study.com

Competition

The James Dyson Award, an international design and engineering competition, invites submissions for 2025.

Eligibility: Current students of Engineering, Product Design and Industrial Design or those who have graduated in these subjects in the last four years. If entering as a team, the team leader must have studied one of the qualifying subjects, and all team members must be (or have been within the last four years) enrolled for at least one semester in an undergraduate or graduate programme.
Deadline: July 16
Prizes: £30,000 and chance to commercialise their invention for global winner. £5,000 for the national winners.

For more details, visit www.jamesdyson award.org/

SAVE THE DATE

RISE 2025
Amrita Career Success Forum, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, is hosting Roadmap to Innovation Success and Excellence (RISE 2025), a career guidance programme for aspiring engineers across 13 states until April 20. The event offers students an opportunity to interact with expert faculty, receive personalised career counselling, and explore the university's academic programmes and is designed to help students navigate the evolving fields of engineering and technology. The programme covers a wide range of topics, including emerging career opportunities in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Robotics, Cybersecurity, Renewable Energy, and Data Science. Students will also gain insights into the Amrita Entrance Examination Engineering (AEEE), scholarships, and admissions processes.
amrita.link/rise

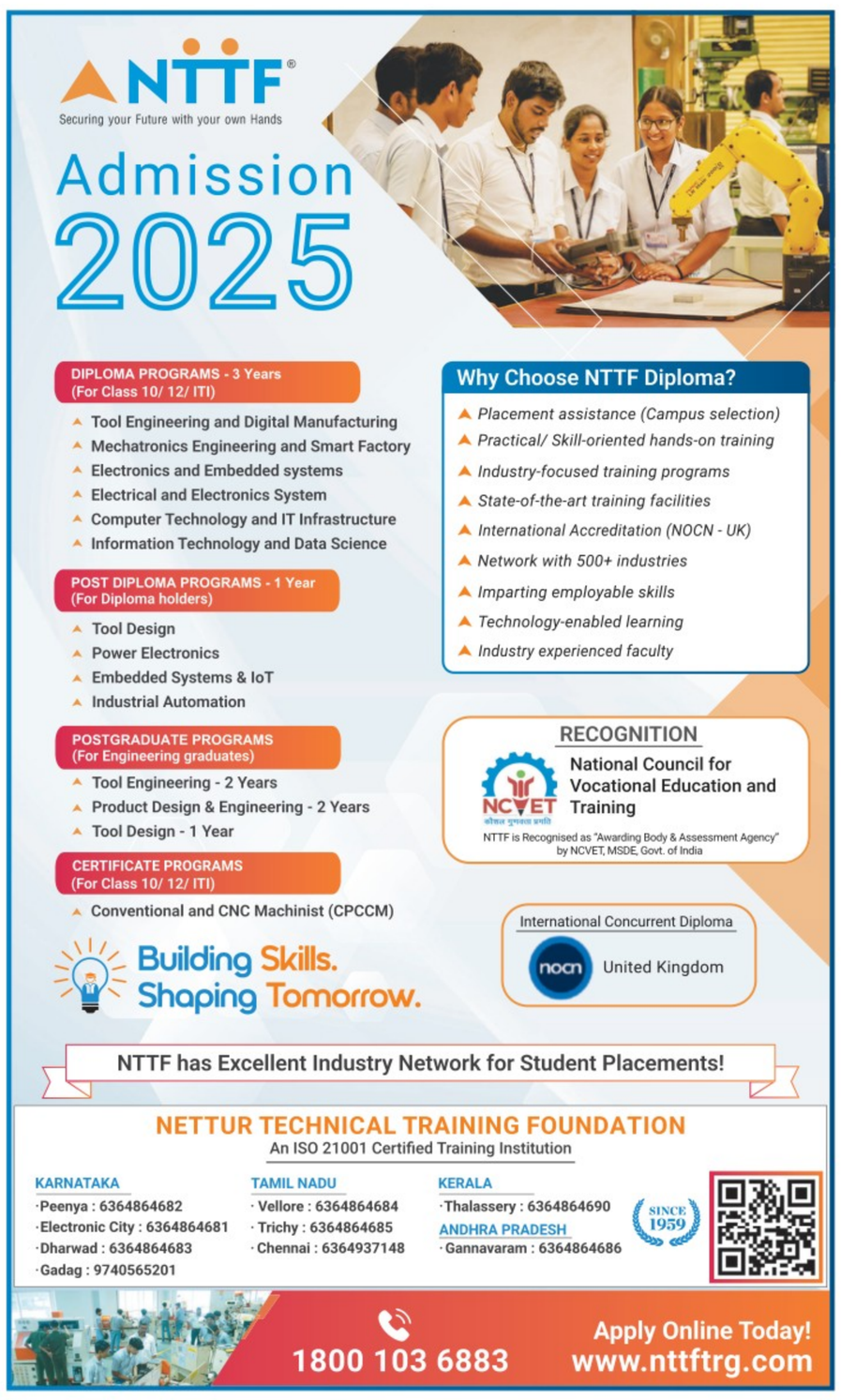
Admissions
Crio.Do has opened registrations for its **Fellowship Programme in Software Development with Gen-AI.**
Eligibility: Graduate degree in any field.New batches are conducted every month. Any graduate can apply.
https://bit.ly/4bG55ap

Masters' Union has launched the **Masters' Union School of Emerging Technologies**, which invites applications for its four-year undergraduate programme in Data Science & AI with Illinois Institute of Technology (Illinois Tech).
Eligibility: Classes 10 and 12 scores, JEE (Mains) scores, video essay
Deadline: April 2025
https://tinyurl.com/4eb5dw6c

The University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, the U.K., has launched an M.Sc. in Statistics and Data Science course to commence in September.
Eligibility: Minimum second-class (2:2) Honours degree or overseas equivalent; IELTS overall score of 6.0 with no component below 5.5.
https://tinyurl.com/2m3wntx3
A webinar on this programme will be held on May 6.
https://tinyurl.com/4tn8arvd

The University of Sheffield, the U.K, invites applications for its BEng Mechatronic and Robotic Engineering degree starting in September. Faculty of Engineering offers scholarships
Eligibility: 80% in Class 12 (Indian exam boards using a percentage scale), 8.0 in class 12 (CBSE board using a GPA scale); IELTS sore of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each component or alternative.
https://tinyurl.com/2wrbv975

Nagaland University has launched a UG programme in Basic Sciences from 2025-26 with three- or four-year programmes in Botany, Chemistry, Maths, Physics, and Zoology.
Eligibility: 60% in all classes including class 12 or equivalen; valid CUET (UG) score in the relevant discipline.
https://tinyurl.com/mfdmseur



Affidavit on continuing Bandipur night traffic ban turns contentious

State govt. is said to be under pressure from Kerala Congress leaders to lift the ban; affidavit has now been recalled

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

With the State government believed to be under pressure from Kerala Congress leaders to lift the night ban on vehicular traffic traversing through the Bandipur Tiger Reserve, an affidavit prepared by a senior Forest Department official favouring the continuation of the ban has become contentious and the government is learnt to have asked for it to be reworked.

The Conservator of Forest in Project Elephant had sent the affidavit – that did not favour lifting the night traffic ban backed by the data on the ground – to the registrar of the Supreme Court, which has now been recalled. Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre warned officials against

A file photo of a highway passing through Bandipur Tiger Reserve.

acting on their own at an emergency meeting convened here on Sunday, during which he is also learnt to have sought the opinion of senior officers on the night traffic ban. According to sources, the affidavit has been asked to be changed. Sources said that AICC secretary (Organisation) K.C. Venugopal in particular is pushing for the night traffic ban to be removed. In February, the Forest Minister asked the officials to submit a report on the pros and cons of maintaining or lifting the night traffic ban and even asked for possible solutions. With the report yet to be submitted, the Minister reminded the officers to turn it in quickly. The government, it is learnt, is under pressure, especially after Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi's victory from the Wayanad Lok Sabha constituency, and a petition is also being heard in the Supreme Court seeking the removal of the night traffic ban that has been in place for over a decade now.

Department sources said the official had sent the affidavit without seeking the consent of the State government or getting legal advice. "The continuation or removal of the night traffic ban is a policy matter and decisions are to be taken at the government level. Individual officers cannot take such a decision, and the officer has been reprimanded," department sources said.

MP criticises govt.

Meanwhile, Bengaluru South MP Tejaswi Surya criticised the government and said: "The Congress government is under pressure from the high command and its newly elected MP from Kerala. It is shamelessly attempting to sacrifice Karnataka's forests to appease its political masters. For years, the night travel ban has been critical to protecting Bandipur." Taking to social media platform X, he said the BJP government had upheld the policy with Hunsur-Gonikoppa-Kutta route serving as an alternative for travellers.

"Even the Supreme Court in 2019 directed the State to maintain the closure policy. The current move by the Congress is a sure-shot sellout to vested interests from Kerala and this should stop. Karnataka's forests, its wildlife, and its future are not bargaining chips for Congress' political compulsions," he said.

Basavaraj Horatti says he is contemplating resignation

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti told reporters in Hubballi on Sunday that he was considering resigning from his post due to the low quality of debates and increasing indiscipline in the legislature.

Mr. Horatti met some reporters at his house in the morning. He expressed great displeasure at what he called a deterioration in the quality of debates in the State legislature. He told them he was considering resigning from his post as he was upset with the fall in standards of debate in the legislature.

Basavaraj Horatti, Legislative Council Chairman. FILE PHOTO

"These are bad times. The quality of debates in the Council and Assembly is falling. Even the general behaviour of members is deteriorating. That issues such as honey traps are surfacing in the session demonstrate the quality of our debates. I do not know if I should be there in such a House or if I should preside over it. I have been a member of the Council for over four decades. But now I am contemplating resignation," he said.

"Politics is reaching very low levels. Members of the legislature are disobedient and do not follow the instructions of the Chair. It has forced me to introspect. I will take a decision after consulting my well-wishers, he said. To a query, he said there were some technical issues regarding the issue of resignation. Once they are resolved, I will decide on it," he said.

From Page One

Honey-trap issue: Kharge meets CM

AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in Bengaluru on Sunday.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Sources said that the party leaders were of the view that Mr. Rajanna should have spoken for himself and should not have involved others. Mr. Rajanna had claimed in the Legislative Assembly that he had information of 48 persons, including judges, being honey-trapped or attempts made on them.

'Will meet high command'

Mr. Rajendra told reporters in Tumakuru that his father had been targeted because he spoke his mind, and that he was a Dalit leader. Besides complaining to the State police chief, he would meet the AICC president, AICC secretary (Organisation) K.C. Venugopal, and AICC general secretary in charge of Karnataka Randeep Surjewala to explain to them about the developments.

To a question about the "big leader" behind this, he said, "Whoever is the mahanayaka (big leader), this has to end. It is not about targeting Mr. Rajanna, it can happen to anyone. This attack is not a good development."

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar refused to speak about Mr. Rajendra meeting the Chief Minister on Saturday evening.

"Don't ask me anything about someone meeting somebody. Many people, including MLAs, MPs and other people meet Chief Minister. People also meet me. Anyone can meet anyone. Ask me about my department and don't ask me anything else," he told reporters, also brushing aside reports of the high command taking the honey-trap issue seriously.

It's part of efforts to grab CM's post from Siddaramaiah: BYV

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI

BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra on Sunday alleged that the entire honey-trapping episode was part of efforts to grab the Chief Minister's post from Siddaramaiah.

"Much has been already discussed about it [honey-trapping] in the Assembly. I don't want to comment on it further. The entire episode is a part of the competition to grab the Chief Minister's seat. Let us see how Congress leaders will respond to the issue. We will respond to it later," Mr. Vijayendra said during his brief interaction with the mediapersons in Kalaburagi on Sunday.

He was responding to the queries on Cooperation Minister K.N. Rajanna's allegations that legislators, senior politicians, and judges were the victims of organised honey-trapping.

'Minority appeasement'

"The more important issue to be discussed is the minority appeasement by the Congress government. The BJP is not anti-Muslim. But the Congress government's Muslim appeasement at the cost of disrespect to Hindus is unforgivable. The recent Budget that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah presented has nothing to do with the overall development of the State. There is nothing in the Budget but appeasement of Muslims. Nobody had expected such a Budget without a vision from a seasoned Chief Minister," he said.

BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra addressing a media conference with former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa in Kalaburagi on Sunday. ARUN KULKARNI

Terming the six-month suspension of 18 BJP MLAs as an anti-constitutional move, Mr. Vijayendra appealed to Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader to reconsider his decision.

"As many as 18 BJP MLAs were suspended from the House when they were protesting against the Congress government's appeasement of minorities and other issues. If the Speaker had felt that the behaviour of the MLAs in question was inappropriate, he should have decided within the scope of his powers. He could have placed the MLAs under suspension for the remaining period of the Assembly session. Suspending them for six months is illegal. The former Speaker Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri and other experts have expressed similar opinions," he said.

Pointing to the additional restrictions imposed on the suspended MLAs, such as they shall not participate in the official meetings and exercise their franchises in urban local body elections, Mr. Vijayendra said the decision was anti-constitutional. "I think the Speaker took this decision at a bad time. Suspension of MLAs from the House for six months amounts to insulting the voters of the constituencies that the members represent," he said.

Former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa and Mr. Vijayendra were in the city to finalise the wedding of the BJP veteran's grandson (the son of B.Y. Raghavendra, Lok Sabha member from Shivamogga) and the daughter of Lingarajappa Appa, a senior Vishwa Hindu Parishad leader.

CORRIDORS OF POWER

House of elders, really?

The cacophony that prevailed during the just-concluded Budget session in the Legislative Council, supposed to be a forum of seniors with room for sensible discussions, seems to have irked many, including Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. The session saw agitated members hurling allegations and abuses, especially in the final week.

Expressing unhappiness at the unfolding events, the Chief Minister at one point said, "I was wrong in believing that members maintain dignity and honour in the Upper House due to their political maturity. There is scant respect for the Chairman, an eight-time legislator, for his seniority." Chairman Basavaraj Horatti, who struggled to bring the House in order and was forced to get onto his feet several times on that day, concurred with the Chief Minister. Another veteran legislator, A.H. Vishwanath (*in picture*), also expressed disappointment and said, "This looks like an entertainment programme. The unfolding of events has hurt the honour of the House."

Preference to first-time MLAs

Karnataka Legislative Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader set a new trend during the just-concluded Budget session by denying the opportunity for "visiting professors" to speak during the Budget discussion and instead giving more opportunities to first- and second-time members.

When the Chief Minister's Economic Adviser and senior Congress MLA Basavaraj Rayaraddi sought an opportunity to speak, Mr. Khader tersely said, "You are a visiting professor... You can speak later." Meanwhile, Opposition BJP MLAs wondered what was there for Mr. Rayaraddi to speak on the Budget. Being the economic adviser, Mr. Rayaraddi knew all there was to know about the Budget, said Basanagouda R. Patil Yatnal. Nearly 80 members spoke on the Budget during this session.

All vulnerable to the trap

The allegations of an attempt to honey-trap Cooperation Minister K.N. Rajanna and his admission of it on the floor of the Legislative Assembly, consumed most of the time on the last day of the Budget session of the legislature. Several members had varied things to say about it.

But how many leaders have been the victims of honey traps in the State? While speaking about his case, Mr. Rajanna said he knew of 48 such cases. Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi, who spoke to reporters in Belagavi on Saturday, said the number was 400 and not just 48. Mr. Satish Jarkiholi, whose brother and BJP leader Ramesh Jarkiholi had to resign following a similar incident, said honey-trapping was not an isolated incident, but a continuous, well-orchestrated effort by several organised gangs who have vested interests. He said that a few months ago, videos of a senior bureaucrat who was a victim of such a trap were circulating in the State. He cautioned, however, that such attempts were aimed not just at the politicians, but everyone who was part of the power structure. They could be officers, businessmen or even fixers who are seen making deals in the corridors of the Vidhana Soudha. When a reporter piped in to ask if journalists were safe, he said they too were no longer safe.

Sharath S. Srivatsa
Nagesh Prabhu
Rishikesh Bahadur Desai

Third trouble-causing elephant captured in Hassan district

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

The Forest Department staff captured a wild elephant near Hebbanahalli in Sakleshpur on Sunday. The pachyderm had been causing trouble in parts of Hassan district.

With that, the department has captured three elephants in the operation that began on March 16.

The staff identified the *makna* elephant (tusk-less male) and tracked it. The veterinarian in the team fired the tranquillizer dart to sedate the animal. Later, the staff captured the elephant with the help of

The Forest Department staff captured a wild elephant near Hebbanahalli in Sakleshpur taluk of Hassan district on Sunday.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tamed elephants. According to the department, the *makna* elephant had been raiding agricultural land and often troubled people in the locality.

Tamed elephants - Dhananjaya, Prashantha, Bheema, Kanjan, Harsha, Ekalavya, and Mahendra - played a prominent role in the operation. The department conducted the operation to capture three trouble-causing elephants in the region following the death of four people in elephant attacks within two months.

The people in parts of Belur, Sakleshpur, Alur, and Arkalgud taluks of Hassan have been demanding the capture and rehabilitation all the elephants roaming in the region.

Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre, who visited Belur earlier this month, assured the local people that all trouble-causing elephants would be shifted to Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

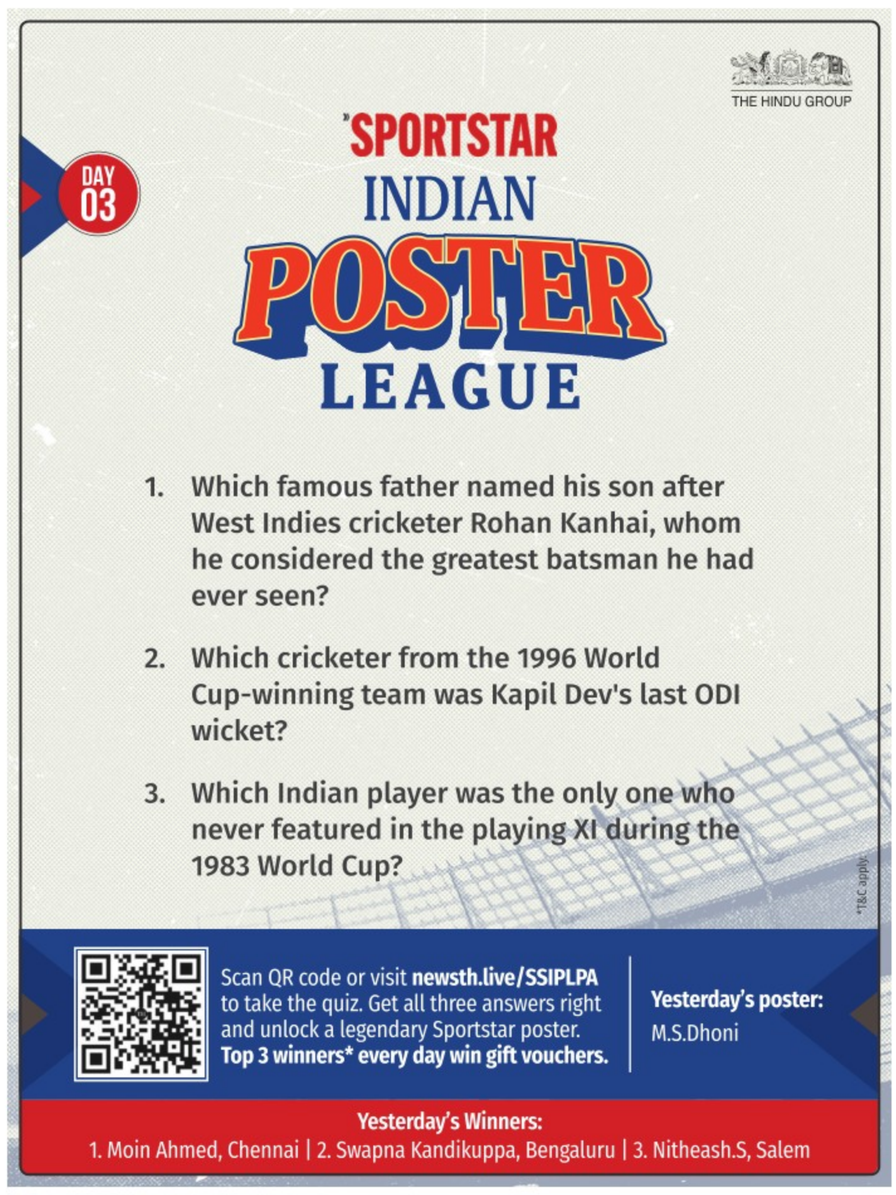
REMEMBRANCE

LOVING MEMORY

P. S. RAM CHANDER
02/06/1948 to 24/03/2002

You have and always will be our inspiration. Thoughts of you give us direction in life. Love you papa.

Your Devoted Wife, Son & Daughter



Building a community of nature educators

Nature Conservation Foundation's Nature Classrooms is a space where people can feel free to come, share their work, collaborate, network and give nature education a voice

Preeti Zachariah
BENGALURU

A game of spring bingo is underway at Cubbon Park on a pleasant Sunday morning. The players fan across the park's lush lawns and thickets of trees, dodging other Sunday regulars (walkers, joggers, readers, skaters, dogs, lovers ambling hand-in-hand) as they attempt to identify specific things in the park: new leaves, flowering trees, spiderlings, edible leaves and birdsong. Once they cross out most of the items on their respective bingo cards, they sit in a circle under a large tree, ready to share insights and meet other like-minded people.

Now in its 10th edition, this monthly event is a nature educators' meet-up, an informal convening of people in or interested in the nature learning space. These meets, an initiative of the Nature Conservation Foundation's Nature Classrooms, is a space "where people can feel free to come, share their work, collaborate, network and give nature education a voice," says Priyanka Prakash, a project manager at Nature Classrooms.

According to nature educator and ecologist Vena Kapoor who founded and heads Nature Classrooms, an initiative to link everyday learning and education to the natural world, this idea of an informal meet-up was seeded from a casual conversation during a team meeting. "My colleagues and I were discussing how many people reach out to us, saying that they are also interested in nature education and asking if they could meet us," she says. This casual conversation led to them thinking that it would be "nice for people from the nature education space to catch up occasionally, just to discuss each other's work, see if we want to share resources, figure out what is happening in this space and help each other."

In April last year, a call was put out on the Nature Classrooms Instagram page announcing an in-person meeting for nature educators in Bengaluru.

The turnout at the first meetup, which was held on April 21, at Cubbon Park, was impressive, which surprised them, recalls Veena. "Some people who came were just curious and wanted to know what other people were doing. Or there were people who were planning to get into nature education and wanted to meet people who were already doing nature education," she says. What also became evident was that people were just happy to see the number of other people working in this space, she believes. "It made them feel less alone."

During this meetup, many participants also told the organisers that they wanted a more consistent engagement, so this first informal meeting became the first of a series of regular events at Cubbon Park. "We decided that we will all meet on the last Sunday of every month and stick to that so automatically people will be able to add it to their diaries," says Vena. Since then, this informal meetup has occurred every month, except for one month, during the Deepavali break.

Participants from a nature educators session.

At a session

A spirit of camaraderie is visible among the group under the large tree at Cubbon Park, with green grapes and cookies being passed around and plenty of side talk. Manini Bansal, a visual communication designer and animal-lover, who is facilitating this session, then takes over, beginning by talking about her own journey."I am someone who grew up just enjoying nature and loving being outdoors...constantly looking for creatures...bringing random animals into the house," she confesses, with a laugh, recalling how her grandmother used to call her Mowgli.

Manini goes on to trace her career path, starting with her training at design school, her first job at a design studio ("I absolutely hated it") and her experience of working as the managing editor of *Current Conservation*, a not-for-profit quarterly print and online magazine focusing on conservation. Back then, only people from the conservation space knew about this magazine, so her goal was to engage the larger public "to make sure that the magazine was out there through different ways of design and communication," she says. In keeping with this goal, the magazine often conducted events for the public, including nature education workshops for children, she says, describing some of them. She then raises a very germane question: How do you talk about nature to children from different socioeconomic backgrounds?

A nature educators session at Cubbon Park. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The rest of the group starts chiming in with their own perspectives, ideas and experiences, with the focus of the conversation hopscotching from the use of effective nature-based education tools to the problems of parachuting in and out of communities, the scope of nature journals, whether taking a utilitarian human-centric perspective is the best approach to conservation, among other things. Other specific issues, like the impact of the proposed Sharavathi project in Karnataka on the endangered lion-tailed macaques and how development often severely impacts insect diversity, were also discussed at the session.

"We were very conscious, right from the beginning, that we didn't want it to be a unidirectional lecture-based session. We wanted it to be a community space for what we thought we wanted out of these meetings," says Vena. While the Nature Classrooms team facilitated the first few meetings, other participants from the larger community have also been volunteering to facilitate these meet-ups. "So, every session has been very different in terms of topics we have chosen to discuss," she says, while Priyanka adds, "It is just us trying to see the diverse conversations we can have around nature education and how we can bring people to share their work and lead some of these sessions."

It is an initiative to link everyday learning and education to the natural world. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Participants bring in their own perspectives, ideas and experiences, with the focus of the conversation hopscotching from the use of effective nature-based education tools to the problems of parachuting in and out of communities. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Growing the tribe

Priyanka feels that nature education is gaining some momentum now, with many educators developing their own resources and content. But it is still somewhat happening in pockets, which can be isolating, according to her, and so, "we feel it would be so nice if we can come together and exchange our work with one another," she says. "I think this space needs a lot of partnerships and collaborations with people bringing in diverse expertise because education requires different approaches."

Murtuza Khetty, a freelance trainer, educator and theatre professional who has been regularly attending these meetups right from the beginning, agrees. "Not many institutions look at working with nature as part of their whole curriculum," says Murtuza, who has also moderated one of these sessions. In his opinion, there are a lot of people in the nature education space who are doing good work, but they're all working in silos. "Being part of this community is helping people get new ideas and collaborate," he says, an opinion also echoed by artist and educator Antara Mukherji. "I get to meet this tribe of people that I connect with immensely and can relate to," says Antara, who especially likes the group's diversity. "The connection-building and opening of another perspective helps; sometimes I feel very secure in my opinion, but then getting another perspective opens up the mind," she says.

There is also strength in numbers, says Vena, who believes that creating a collective will lead to more voices speaking together on nature education in a manner that is "much more powerful and effective than working with silos," she says. She hopes that, at some point, the group can come together to create a resource or intervention collaboratively "that all of us can use...something designed in such a way that it can be tweaked for different geographies and cultural contexts."

Vena also believes that, over time, nature educators will be able to open different chapters of this meetup in other parts of the country. "We've got people from outside the city who've heard about these meetups and planned their trips to Bengaluru to ensure they attend them. The hope is that this model can be taken to other cities and towns."

To know more, follow the Nature Classrooms Instagram page.

An oral history of India's fisherwomen

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

To mark International Women's Day, the National Gallery of Modern Art, Bengaluru, is hosting, 'Breaking The Nets: An oral history of India's fisherwomen,' which sheds light on the unseen labour of fisherwomen in India, who play a vital role in the fishing industry–from catching and processing fish to mending nets and maintaining gear.

"Despite their immense contributions, their work remains largely unrecognised. The series brings stories from across India, showcasing fisherwomen's struggles against discrimination, their fight for recognition, and the solutions they have created," said a release by ngma.

The screening will have oral history of fisherwomen from West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, and Bihar.

The event will be held on March 28, 5.00 p.m. at the auditorium of National Gallery of Modern Art.

'Women are challenging the status quo in tech and reshaping the tech landscape'

A panel discussion titled 'Breaking Barriers in Tech: Stories of Resilience and Innovation' was held on Honeywell's campus

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Over 200 women professionals from across the technology industry, including innovators, thought leaders, and changemakers, came together to highlight the power of women-led breakthroughs in technology, and foster a future where women lead the charge in innovation, here recently.

A day-long event held on Honeywell's campus in Bengaluru fostered industry-wide discussions on breaking barriers, creating opportunities for women to not just participate but take the lead in driving transformation shaping the future of technology.

A panel discussion titled 'Breaking Barriers in Tech: Stories of Resilience and Innovation,' highlighted how women were challenging the status quo in tech and reshaping the tech landscape with bold, forward-thinking approaches. Women leaders including Latha Chemrakalam, Vice President, Continental, Ashwini Siddhi, AI Head at GoDaddy, and Sumedha Limaye, VP, Engineering at Quest Global, spoke at the event. It also featured Vandana Suri, founder of TAXSHE, India's women-only taxi service, and Nisha Millet, former Olympic swimmer, who shared their journeys of perseverance to inspire the audience.

The day-long session fostered industry-wide discussions on breaking barriers, creating opportunities for women. GETTY IMAGES

Speaking on the occasion, Anita Vijaykrishnan, VP, Engineering and India Leader at Honeywell Technology Solutions said, "Women in tech are not just solving problems–they are shaping the future. At Honeywell, we recognise women's leadership in every breakthrough and are proud to support and elevate their capabilities and contributions.'"

Anant Maheshwari, President & CEO of Global Regions, Honeywell, in his keynote emphasised the importance of diverse voices in shaping the future of technology. Women in tech were not only contributing to current advancements but were also pivotal in driving the innovations that would define the next era, he added.

Mr. Maheshwari called for greater empowerment of women to lead, and emphasised the role of Honeywell's initiative 'LeadHERS in Tech' in providing a platform for women to shape the future of technology.

A fireside chat between Ashish Modi, President of Honeywell India, and Niranjan Kalyandurg, President of Honeywell Technology Solutions, shed light on the role of male allyship in fostering an inclusive workplace and the importance of sponsorship in advancing women's careers. They also spoke on issues around gender biases and highlighted the need for training to mitigate unconscious blind spots.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 24, 1975

Vijayanagar Festival at Hampi

Hospet, March 23: Scholars, architects and experts on tourism should join together and recreate the glory that was Vijayanagar, the Governor, Mr. Mohanlal Sukhadia, said at Hampi near here today.

He was inaugurating an eight-day 'Vijayanagar festival' organised for the first time by the State Tourism Department and the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation. Mr. Sukhadia said Hampi, where the Vijayanagar empire once flourished, was an ideal place for attracting tourists. The architecture even after the destruction, still gave a hint of the magnificence which it once enjoyed.

Cancer Unit Opened at Manipal

Mangalore, March 23: The Union Government would set up 20 cobalt units in far-flung centres in the country for detecting and curing cancer, Dr. Karan Singh, Union Health Minister, said today. Inaugurating a cancer Institute and a cobalt plant at the Kasturba Hospital at Manipal, he said people now had to go to Bangalore for treatment. Sri Visweshatirtha Swamiji of Pejawar Mutt blessed the Institute and congratulated the Manipal Medical Relief Trust for undertaking this new venture.

CITYBEATS

Terrains on canvas

ONGOING
A solo art exhibition titled Ephemeral Homelands, featuring the works of Siddharth Shingade is on. Journey through the rural landscapes of Marathwada in Maharashtra, through paintings that feature a bright palette of sunflower yellows and ocean blues.
On at KYNKYNY Art Gallery, Infantry Road till April 18. Entry is free.

Discount dash

ONGOING
Daysie has offers and activities on during this IPL season. Enjoy an array of exclusive contests and special drinks – IPL-themed LIITs, inning runs (online predict and win contest) or participate in their Instagram story contest where a live meter will track the innings, runs and more.
On at Daysie, MG Road and RR Nagar, till May 25. Details on Daysie.in

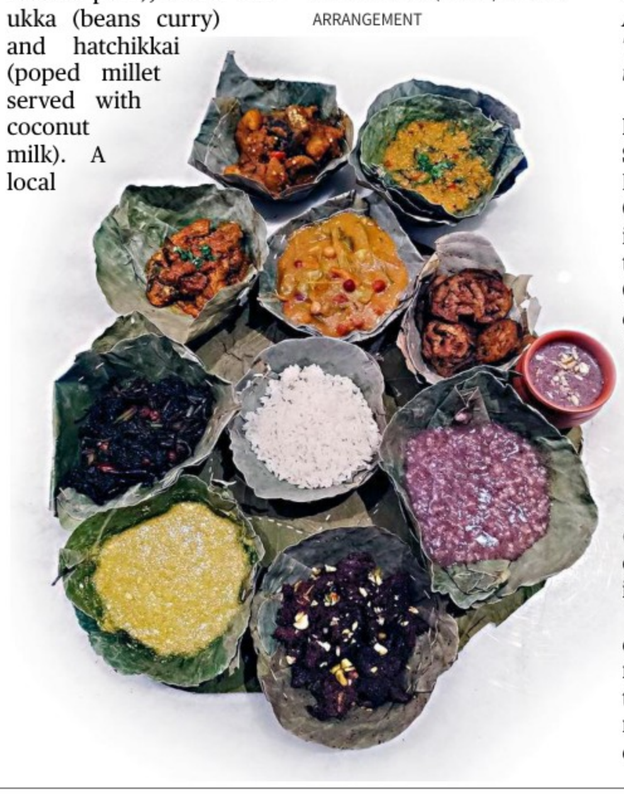
Canine crusade

MARCH 29
Maverick & Farmer, along with Pre-Loved & Co and the Ulsoor Canine Squad, will host The Pet Lover Fundraiser offering activities, shopping, food and community connections – all in support of pets. All-day breakfast, expert talks, sustainable summer fashion and pre-loved fashion and pet products will also be there.
At Maverick & Farmer, Ulsoor, 10am. Entry free.

Discover the flavours of hyperlocal cusines from the Nilgiris to Saurashtra. We try Badaga mutton curry, Kathiyawadi brinjal, ant chutney and more

Going hyper on your plate

Tastebuds' delight (From left) Koi uthukka from Badaga cuisine, Kathiyawadi dishes, mutta roast and eggplant masala from Ravuthar cuisine, a Bastar thali (below). SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Prachi Rathi

Recently, I attended the Badaga cuisine pop-up at The Park, Bengaluru, and ever since, I have been drawn to hyperlocal cuisines. Each time I try a new one, I am stunned by the flavours. Hyperlocal cuisines have the potential to break the monotony of mainstream dishes and surprise diners with something unusual. Fusion can also help spotlight these flavours like the red sticky rice sushi served at Axone, a modern Naga restaurant. If you are looking to break the routine and try something different, here are a few hyperlocal cuisines you should add to your list.

Badaga from Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu

Badaga cuisine, native to the Nilgiri region of Tamil Nadu, a blend of culinary influences from the Portuguese, British, and South Karnataka. Millets like barnyard and ragi, green vegetables, potatoes and a large variety of beans are a major part of this cuisine.

"We use beans like giant white kidney, hyacinth, scarlet runner, zebra, and fava, along with plenty of dairy products," explains Suresh Belliraj, the founder of Odae, a restaurant in Kotagiri, Nilgiris.

Unlike other South Indian cuisines, Badaga food is rather mild. It includes a variety of dishes that are earthy and have the essence of the hills. Some of these include badu uthukka (mutton curry), Baccanai mottai (egg paniyaram), sutta badu (fire roasted pork), avarai uthukka (beans curry) and hatchikkai (poped millet served with coconut milk). A local highlight is pattai saraya, a liquor made from hill jamun bark.

Badaga cuisine at Odae is served on a pre-order basis. At Catherine falls road, Aravenu, Kotagiri, Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu. For more details: 9443021226

Kathiyawadi from Saurastra, Gujarat

Kathiyawadi cuisine from Gujarat's Saurashtra region is bold, spicy, and unlike the sweet stereotype of Gujarati food. Due to the dry climate, staples include millet breads like bajra and jowar, and chickpea flour-based dishes. "Millets have always been an essential part of our diet," says Karnabhai Bavabhai Maldhari, founder of the 42-year-old Garden Fairyland restaurant in Rajkot.

Highlights of Kathiyawadi cuisine include sev tameta nu shaak (spicy tomato and sev curry), dhokli nu shaak (chickpea flour cubes in gravy), bharela ringan (stuffed brinjal) and ringan nu bhartu (charred brinjal with spices).

"Kathiyawadi food is mostly gluten-free," adds Maldhari. At his restaurant, spices and dairy products are grown and sourced in-house.

Garden Fairyland. At National highway 8B, Marketing yard, Rajkot, Gujarat. For more details call, 9099070070

Bastar from Southern Chhattisgarh

Bastar cuisine, from southern Chhattisgarh, reflects the region's tribal roots and deep connection to the forest. Staples like mahua flowers, bamboo shoots, wild mushrooms, and sal leaves are key, while British influence introduced wheat, spices, and tea.

Bordering Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra has also shaped the cuisine with lentils and regional techniques.

According to Mohit Chandra Bhanjdeo , founder of Bastar Heritage Cafe in Jagdalpur, "There is not much awareness about this cuisine in India."

Minimalist cooking and organic, forest-sourced ingredients define this cuisine. The cafe serves a traditional Bastar thali featuring unique dishes like aamat, chapra chutney (red ant chutney), pudga (meat cooked in leaf bowls), gar mati bhela (mud-roasted eggs), and aarsa (rice and jaggery dessert).

"There is an interesting palm-based liquor called Salfi, as well as wine made from dried Mahuwa flowers, both traditionally crafted here" Mohit adds.

Bastar Heritage Cafe. At Art Gallery, near Dalpat Sagar Road, Motitalab para, Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh. For more details, call 8269302080

Ravuthar from South India

Ravuthar cuisine is influenced by various cultures, borrowing traditional cooking styles from Persia, Turkey, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala. Dishes like thikkadi, rice flour balls cooked in mutton curry resemble Kerala's pedi, while jalar dosai, inspired by Malaysia, and dum Adai, similar to Middle Eastern basboosa, are also part of this rich culinary tradition.

"Staple ingredients of this cuisine are rice and coconut" says Hazeena Seyad, author of Ravuthar Recipes, who began documenting these recipes when she realised there was a lack of resources. Inspired by her grandmother, her book took her almost 3 years to complete.

One such dish is the Biryani vaada made from leftover biryani, where water is added and left overnight. The next day, the mixture is pounded, shaped into vadas, and fried to make a snack.

Discover the flirty, fiesty art of Lavani

Shilpa Anandraj

Gear up for a vibrant performance that is equal parts sassy, classy and entertaining. It is a world where the peppy beats of *dholak* are accompanied by the beats of *ghungroos* and intricate footwork, of a dancer who can flirt with her looks and dance with her eyebrows – all set to a fair share of hoots, whistles, and catcalls.

This is the vibrant world of Lavani, a folk dance form from Maharashtra. Known for being unapologetically fun, it also sends across a message that you do not always need to be serious when it comes to art and life.

"That is the fun part of Lavani," says Savitri Medhatul, founder of Kali Billi Productions and director of *Lavanyavati*, which she will be bringing to Bengaluru. "It is a storytelling medium that can tackle anything from politics to family drama, all with a healthy dose of humour."

Lavanyavati is Savitri's latest production. "I've been collaborating with Lavani artistes since 2006," says the dancer, choreographer, and a documentary filmmaker. "With this production we talk about the rich history of Lavani and its evolution in the past 250 years. Lavani has undergone a stunning transformation over the years, and I'm not just talking about the music and dance, but also about the attitude and its unstoppable energy".

Lavani would not be complete without mentioning its flirtatious aspect, including the teasing and pushing of boundaries, says Savitri. "There is a bit of a flirt in each of us, and if we can use that to talk about important issues, in a fun manner, why not?" Lavani, Savitri adds is often considered an item number because of its Shringara rasa. "This form goes beyond fun and frolic."

Enticing and energetic Savitri Medhatul (below) and in a still from her production. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

A classical dancer-turned-Lavani enthusiast, Savitri believes Lavani is about liberation. "It's about breaking free from conventions and embracing your inner diva. We're also about inclusivity here. Folk art gives you that freedom."

Lavani was initially performed by men dressed as women when women were not allowed on stage. "Its genesis was in a patriarchal set up. It was only later that women took over and made Lavani their own, bringing in their perspectives. For instance, we have Lavanis that talk about menstruation, when the woman teasingly tells the man she needs a break."

Today, there are men who dance the Lavani. Savitri says this happened in the '90s. "There was an event called *Bin Bai Ka Tamasha*, which translates to 'tamasha without women'. This was when men once again took to this folk form and started performing it."

Savitri says, *Lavanyavati* will be an immersive journey that will take one through its journey of evolution. "It is devised in collaboration with Lavani and Tamasha artists, and the performance explores how the art form is shaped by social, political, and cultural changes while remaining an enduring force in contemporary culture."

A person who performs Lavani is called Lavanyavati, Savitri says, hence the production will tell the story of Lavani performers. "It will weave together Lavani songs, oral histories, archival family photographs and more, besides the collaborative projects with artist Paromita Vohra."

Lavanyavati was originally commissioned by the Serendipity Arts Festival in Goa and premiered in December 2022, post which the production has toured major festivals such as The Women's Theatre Festival (NCPA Mumbai), Feet On Earth Festival (Hyderabad) and the Kalarang Festival (Ravindra Bhavan Margao).

Lavanyavathi, in English and Marathi, is conceptualised and designed by Savitri. It will have vocals by Sangeeta Panchal and Shubham Sutar on dholki.

The show is open to anyone aged 12 and above and is on March 25, 7.30pm at Jagriti Theatre. Tickets starting from ₹500 are available on BookMyShow.

Changing the norms

Indian classical music is steeped in tradition, but a new generation of artistes is redefining its possibilities. *The Critical Insider*, an initiative, aims to highlight these musicians who honour the past while bringing fresh perspectives and innovation to their art.

The series launches at the Bangalore International Centre with an evening of music, film, and conversation.

The inaugural edition kicks off with a screening of *The Sound Alchemists*, a documentary produced by the Museum of Performing Arts (MOPA), Chennai. The film dives into the rich legacy of the Saraswati veena, an instrument both ancient and evolving, and shines a spotlight on Ramana Balachandhran, a young maestro who is taking its expressive power to new heights. His playing, marked by intricate *gamakas* and an innovative voco-veena approach, has made him a standout in the world of Carnatic music.

The evening does not end there. Following the screening, Ramana will engage in a conversation with Savita Narasimhan, the curator and director of MOPA. Savita, an acclaimed Carnatic vocalist and visual artiste, has spent years documenting and preserving South Indian performing arts. Together, they will explore Ramana's journey, the challenges of innovating within tradition, and what the future holds for the veena and Indian classical music at large.

By creating spaces for dialogue and deeper engagement, The Critical Insider aims to bridge the gap between artists and audiences, making classical music more accessible and appreciated by contemporary listeners.

On March 25, 6.30pm to 8.30pm at Bangalore International Centre, Domlur. Entry free, first-come-first-seated on RSVP.

Chandrasekhar set to replace Surendran as Kerala BJP president

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Rajeev Chandrasekhar

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) central leadership has nominated entrepreneur-turned-politician and former Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar as the next president of the party's Kerala unit.

Mr. Chandrasekhar, who attended the party's core committee meeting in Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday, filed his nomination for the president's post at the BJP's State headquarters at Mararji Bhavan here.

He is unlikely to face any opposition, and BJP leaders appeared confident that Mr. Chandrasekhar's election to the post will be unanimous. Pralhad Joshi, the BJP's central observer, and Prakash Javedkar, the party's Kerala in-charge, announced Mr. Chandrasekhar's name at the core committee meeting.

Mr. Chandrasekhar is slated to take over the party's reins in the State from incumbent K. Surendran, who has led it since 2020. Mr. Chandrasekhar's elevation as the BJP State chief is, in a way, an acknowledgement of his strong performance in the high-profile 2024 Lok Sabha election in the Thiruvananthapuram constituency, where he gave a close fight to Congress leader Shashi Tharoor. Until then, Mr. Chandrasekhar was based in Karnataka, a State he represented in the Rajya Sabha thrice.

By appointing him, the BJP seeks to widen its base, especially among the aspirational younger crowd whom Mr. Chandrasekhar had explicitly targeted in his Lok Sabha campaign.

In the mid-1990s, Mr. Chandrasekhar was one of the tech entrepreneurs who launched BPL Mobile, tapping into the emerging field of mobile telephony. Though he exited the sector a decade later, he founded Jupiter Capital, an investment and financial services firm that now manages assets across several sectors. Later, Mr. Chandrasekhar also took over control of *Asianet News*, a Malayalam news channel.

During the previous National Democratic Alliance government, he was the Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Jal Shakti.

The Kerala Police in 2023 registered cases against him on charges of making communally instigative social media posts in connection with the blasts at a prayer convention of Jehovah's Witnesses at Kalamassery in Kochi.

Union govt. pushes for energy-efficient cooling as power demand soars

Bureau of Energy Efficiency has urged air-conditioner manufacturers to accelerate adoption of BEE 5-star-rated models which could yield significant benefits, including up to 60% energy savings

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

A view of a solar power farm on the outskirts of Hyderabad.

As India braces for record-breaking power demand this summer, the Union government is intensifying its push for energy-efficient cooling solutions. The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) has urged air-conditioner manufacturers to accelerate the adoption of BEE 5-star-rated models. Hyderabad, with its rapid energy and population growth, has been identified as a key city for promoting BEE 5-star-rated ACs. The city's population is expected to reach 1.3 crore by 2031, presenting a significant opportunity for energy-efficient cooling solutions.

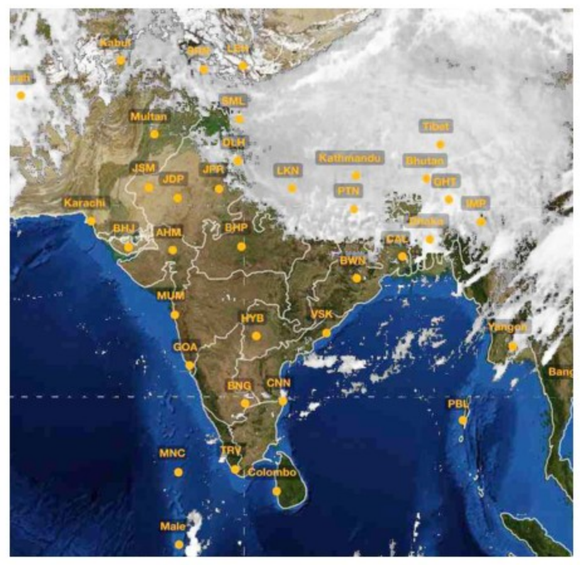
According to the BEE, replacing older air conditioners with BEE 5-star-rated models could yield significant benefits, including up to 60% energy savings, reduced peak power demand, enhanced grid stability and energy security, major climate impact, and cutting millions of tonnes of CO2 emissions annually.

The BEE has called for an industry-led movement to promote energy-efficient cooling, seeking collaboration from manufacturers on a nationwide awareness campaign. The initiative encourages companies to leverage digital marketing, social media and influencer endorsements to educate consumers about the benefits of energy-efficient ACs.

The government's initiative aims to achieve Net Zero emissions and reduce electricity consumption, ensuring grid stability and energy security. With strategic industry collaboration, India can move towards a more sustainable, energy-efficient future while ensuring consumer savings.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Thunderstorm with gusty winds and lightning likely in Kerala, Mahe, Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, Rayalaseema, South interior Karnataka; with lightning likely in Gangetic West Bengal, Odisha, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura. Hot and Humid Conditions likely at isolated places over Gujarat.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	30.6	19.0	Kozhikode	—	35.2	26.0
Ahmedabad	—	39.7	21.9	Kurnool	—	37.4	25.2
Aizawl	—	32.0	16.2	Lucknow	0.9	33.4	15.9
Allahabad	—	36.0	18.0	Madurai	—	36.5	26.1
Bengaluru	9.0	31.2	18.6	Mangaluru	—	33.6	24.1
Bhopal	—	—	—	Mumbai	—	32.7	24.4
Bhubaneswar	—	35.1	16.6	Mysuru	2.0	34.3	19.4
Chandigarh	—	31.6	14.6	New Delhi	—	34.0	13.9
Chennai	—	35.1	26.9	Patna	—	31.8	20.0
Coimbatore	—	35.0	22.5	Port Blair	—	31.7	26.8
Dehradun	—	—	—	Puducherry	—	—	—
Gangtok	1.0	17.9	8.7	Pune	—	39.6	21.5
Goa	—	34.4	20.9	Raipur	0.3	35.0	23.3
Guwahati	—	30.4	17.0	Ranchi	9.0	26.2	14.6
Hubballi				Shillong	0.2	20.2	9.9
Hyderabad	—	33.6	23.5	Shimla	—	24.1	12.3
Imphal	—	29.1	14.3	Srinagar	—	23.1	3.8
Jaipur	—	35.1	17.8	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.3	25.2
Kochi	10.0	34.0	23.4	Tiruchi	—	35.7	25.6
Kohima	—	24.0	13.8	Vijayawada	—	35.2	26.0
Kolkata	2.0	29.4	20.6	Visakhapatnam	—	34.3	26.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.36	.30	19	105	256	
Bengaluru	.10	.35	28	—	129	
Chennai	.10	.10	90	28	52	
Delhi	.16	.91	47	148	220	
Hyderabad	.10	.14	32	60	80	
Kolkata	.13	.41	41	106	85	
Lucknow	.11	.41	55	172	155	
Mumbai	4	—	8	58	118	
Pune	.34	9	18	198	—	
Visakhapatnam	8	.36	19	30	44	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Nalbari, Assam recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 275 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Belgaum, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 28.

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Five police personnel ordered to retire

The Hindu Bureau
VILLUPURAM

Five police personnel, including two head constables, attached to various police stations in Villupuram district, have been given compulsory retirement for allegedly conniving with bootleggers in the illicit liquor tragedy at Marakkanam that claimed 14 lives in 2023.

The orders in this regard were issued to head constables Senthil Kumar of Arakandanallur station and Velu of Roshanai station; and constables Prabhu of Sathiyamangalam station, Muthukumar of Kanjanur station, and Gunasekaran of Vikravandi station, by the Deputy Inspector-General of Police (Villupuram range) Disha Mittal.

Inquiry committee

According to a senior police officer, the orders were issued based on the report of an inquiry committee.

A departmental inquiry was conducted, and the charges against the police personnel in question were proved.

In 2023

The illicit liquor tragedy, which was reported on May 13, 2023, shook the State. Most of the victims were from Ekkiyarkuppam, a coastal hamlet near Marakkanam.

Police personnel deployed at Ekkiyarkuppam near Marakkanam in the wake of the incident in 2023. FILE PHOTO

INBRIEF

Pilgrims make a beeline for Srisailam ahead of Ugadi

The Nallamala forests reverberated with '*Om Namah Sivaya*' chants as pilgrims from Karnataka and Maharashtra started trekking for kilometres to offer prayers at the Bhramaramba Mallikarjuna Swamy temple in Srisailam on the occasion of Ugadi. The Ugadi festivities will be held from March 27 to 31 at the Jyothirlinga temple. While devotees from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana throng the temple during the Mahasivaratri Brahmotsavams, people from Karnataka and Maharashtra visit the place of worship during Ugadi.

KCBC, Syro-Malabar Church protest against Forest Dept.

The Jagratha Commission of the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council (KCBC) and the Syro-Malabar Church have reacted strongly to the Forest Department registering cases against some persons, including peoples' representatives and Bishop George Punnakottil, for participating in a public rally on the old Munnar Road demanding that the road be thrown open to the public. The KCBC statement said that the department, instead of acting on wild animal attacks on humans, was targeting the public and public protest.

Two Maoists surrender before ASR district police

Two area committee members of the banned CPI (Maoist) surrendered before the Alluri Sitharama Raju (ASR) district police on Sunday. They were identified as Ravva Kosa, alias Jagadeesh, 22,, a resident of Yetapaka and working in the Charla-Sabari area, and P. Ramesh, 26, of Bijapur, Chhattisgarh. The police said that Ravva Kosa, influenced by ACM Punem Thulasi, had joined the dalam at the age of 17. Ramesh had joined in 2016. Discrimination against tribals, decreasing public trust and disillusionment with Maoist ideology were some reasons for their surrender.

Conspiracy behind Chennai meet on delimitation, says Kishan Reddy

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

G. Kishan Reddy

Telangana BJP president and Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy on Sunday dismissed the Chennai conclave on delimitation, hosted by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, as a "political conspiracy" by Opposition parties to stall BJP's growth in southern States.

At a press conference at the Bharatiya Janata Party's Telangana office, he accused "scam-tainted, corrupt, and family-run parties" of misleading the public through the Joint Action Committee (JAC) meeting.

He took aim at Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, urging him to focus on fulfilling promised guarantees instead of criticising the Union government.

"If he thinks public discontent over his government's failures will vanish through constant criticism of the Centre, he is mistaken," the Minister said.

'Selfish motives'

He accused Opposition party leaders and Chief Ministers of attending the JAC meeting for "selfish political motives" and using it as a platform for "mudslinging" against the Centre and the BJP. He said that the same tactic was used during the general elections when false propaganda was spread about the Constitution being in danger.

'Friendships exposed'

"The Chennai meeting has only exposed old political friendships, like Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao sharing the same platform," he said.

Mr. Reddy asserted that "there has been no discussion in the Union Cabinet or the party about the delimitation of Parliament constituencies even for a single day". The Census exercise has not yet begun but the Opposition parties are spreading canards about an issue which has no relevance at present, the BJP leader added.

He emphasised that any future delimitation would be carried out in consultation with the States, under the same law introduced by the erstwhile Congress government.

The Union Minister said that the commission overseeing the process would ensure fairness, stating that "not even a grain of rice worth of injustice will be done to any State".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP are keen on gaining power in the southern States and are actively working towards that goal, ensuring that nothing is done to undermine them.

In fact, Mr. Modi firmly believes that the growth and development of States are essential for overall progress of the country, added Mr. Reddy.

Wearing shirts inside temple, SNDP workers protest discrimination

The Hindu Bureau
PATHANAMTHITTA

The centuries-old Koyikkal Sri Dharmasastha temple in Ranni-Perunadu under the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) in Kerala witnessed an unusual protest on Sunday when a group of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) Yogam members entered it wearing shirts, defying a long-standing tradition.

The protesters entered the temple in the morning without removing their shirts and offered prayers. Although a police team was present, they did not intervene.

Speaking to pressperson after the prayers, they said their decision to wear shirts inside the temple was a symbolic protest against caste-based discrimination.

Pointing out that no individual from backward communities has ever been appointed chief priests in major temples such as Sabarimala, they warned of intensifying the protests if the discrimination persisted.

The protest aligns with the views of Sivagiri Madhom president Swami Sathchidananda, who recently urged temples under the Madhom and the SNDP Yogam to abolish the custom that prohibits men from wearing upper garments in temples.

"We have no disagreements with the government. Our protest is against the casteism that exists in the TDB and among *tantris*," said V.K. Vasudevan, one of the protest leaders.

Experts: Women working in multinational corporations at greater risk of TB due to work stress, poor nutrition

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The government has intensified its efforts with programmes such as the *100-Day TB Elimination Special Program*, mobile TB testing units and the *Swasthya Nagaram* project. REPRESENTATIVE PICTURE

Women working in multinational corporations (MNCs) are increasingly vulnerable to tuberculosis (TB) due to work-related stress and neglect of proper nutrition, warn pulmonologists on the occasion of World TB Day. Experts note that career-driven professionals, along with homemakers, often prioritise work or family over their health, leading to weakened immunity and higher susceptibility to infections like TB.

Dr. Kollabattula Ratnababu, an interventional pulmonologist at Aster Prime Hospital said homemakers tend to ignore their own health while taking care of their families, delaying diagnosis and treatment. Adding to this, Dr. M. Rajeev, a pulmonologist highlighted India accounts for 25% of global cases.

TB is an infectious disease caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, which remains dormant in most people but becomes active when immunity is compromised. Poor diet, chronic stress and conditions like diabetes, thyroid disorders, and hypertension can significantly lower immunity. Dr. Ratnababu pointed out that women, particularly homemakers, are more prone to lymph node TB. "Swelling in the neck can be an early sign, and if left untreated, it can lead to pus formation," he said.

To tackle TB, the central government has launched initiatives like the Nikshay Poshan Yojana, offering free medication and ₹500 per month in nutritional support for TB patients. Additionally, all essential TB drugs have been combined into a single tablet to simplify treatment.

The Telangana government has intensified its efforts with programmes such as the *100-Day TB Elimination Special Program*, mobile TB testing units and the *Swasthya Nagaram* project.

ASHAs in Kerala to hold mass hunger strike today

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) agitating for better remuneration and retirement benefits in front of the Kerala Secretariat in Thiruvananthapuram for the past 42 days have decided to observe a mass hunger strike on Monday.

This is being done in solidarity with their three colleagues who have been on an indefinite hunger strike since March 20, to push for their demands.

Petty politics

Delaying the Census aids politicisation of delimitation issue

The impressive gathering in Chennai, on March 22, which brought together leaders from several States – including four Chief Ministers – for the inaugural meeting of the Joint Action Committee (JAC) on Fair Delimitation, sent a clear message: any delimitation exercise based solely on the current population figures is unacceptable. The meeting's primary demand – to extend the freeze on the number of parliamentary constituencies based on the 1971 Census for another 25 years – echoes a similar resolution passed at a recent meeting of parties in Tamil Nadu, which proposed a 30-year extension. This concept of a freeze is not new; it was implemented through the 42nd Amendment (until 2000) and extended again via the 84th Amendment (until 2026). Rightly, the JAC emphasised that States which have successfully implemented family planning should not be penalised with reduced parliamentary representation. This concern, which is particularly prominent in the South, should not be dismissed as a regional issue, despite the strong southern presence at the meeting, which was hosted by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and attended by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, and Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar. The meeting also saw participation from outside the South, including Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Odisha's former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who, in an online address, reinforced the message against punishing States for effective population control measures. It is after a long time that parties across regions and ideologies are uniting on a substantive issue – representative democracy –rather than forming opportunistic electoral coalitions that lack policy coherence.

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi's working president, K.T. Rama Rao, proposed considering a State's fiscal contribution as a parameter in the delimitation process – an idea that may help address the concerns of the southern States. But it might not make sense to predicate decisions with long-term consequences such as delimitation on factors that change from one year to another. In any case, the Union government must act without delay to begin nationwide consultations involving a wide range of parties. Before initiating the Delimitation Commission, it should facilitate inclusive dialogue, regardless of when the next Census – an essential prerequisite – is conducted. So far, statements from Union Ministers have failed to provide clarity. The Centre must recognise the importance of transparency and consultation on this inexplicable delay. Inexplicable, unless petty political calculations are factored in.

Not the only path

A purely militaristic solution against the Maoists can also lead to tribal repression

In two operations in Bastar, Chhattisgarh on Thursday, 30 alleged "Maoists" were gunned down taking the number of Maoists killed in operations, according to security forces, to over 100 this year. In its 20-plus years of existence as a unified political force, the Communist Party of India (Maoist) finds itself in its most challenging period. The insurgency had peaked in the mid- to late-2000s, when the then government termed it as the "greatest security threat" to the nation, and has since then been restricted to the forested areas of southern Chhattisgarh and contiguous areas. This weakening was never in doubt – the Maoists profess an anachronistic political strategy of adopting violent means to achieve their goals, and in the long war of attrition against the Indian state, have subjugated their "mass" work to militarism. This has resulted in the erosion of support bases in places that were built where and when the agencies of the Indian state were weak. With successive central governments seeking to address the development lacunae in governance in such tribal areas and adopting a take-no-prisoners approach to tackle the Maoists' guerilla warfare, their threat has been significantly whittled down. In the anti-insurgency strategy, however, the police and paramilitary agencies have made errors – the Salwa Judum campaign is one example and it is still not clear whether the anti-Maoist operations that have led to claims of many casualties among the insurgents include tribals caught in the crossfire.

If the Indian state – the Union and State governments – believes that the Maoist threat can be extinguished using a purely militaristic approach, then this is not borne out from experiences elsewhere against similar insurgencies. Ideologies such as Maoism, even if anachronistic and misplaced in the current socio-political milieu, tend to take deeper roots when repressions peak and a purely militaristic solution that envisages a violent end to the insurgency has the possibility of causing disenchantment among tribals. A better solution would be to involve civil society in working out a truce and sending a clear message for the Maoists to give up their violent path with incentives for rehabilitation. The Maoists have shown little inclination in doing so, being stubborn in upholding their flawed understanding of the Indian state and the people. The loss of lives, that includes tribals either coerced into the violence due to repression that they face or simply caught in the crossfire, should compel them to change tack, if they are truly concerned about the lot of the tribal people they claim to stand up for. The experience of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) or that of the Nepali Maoists, who gave up their insurgent campaigns, suggests that such a pathway is possible.

A perspective, on the Editorial and Opinion pages, on TB control and issues. World Tuberculosis Day is observed on March 24 every year

The need for universal and equitable health coverage

Dr. Soumya Swaminathan

is Chairperson, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF)

India has made substantial and tangible progress in Tuberculosis (TB) care, adopting new strategies to detect, treat and prevent TB. Some key areas of progress include the expansion of molecular testing for rapid detection of TB and drug-resistance; the introduction of the shorter, all-oral BPaLM regimen (a combination of four drugs Bedaquiline (B), Pretomanid (Pa), Linezolid (L), and Moxifloxacin (M)); doubling of the entitlement under the Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana (NPY) for nutrition support to ₹1,000 a month; roll-out of TB preventive therapy; and an expanded role for communities through the involvement of TB survivors and Champions. The impact of the roll-out of these strategies can be seen in the 17.7% decline in TB incidence in India, from 237 per 1,00,000 population in 2015 to 195 per 1,00,000 population in 2023, in tandem with a 21.4% reduction in TB-related deaths.

Since Independence, India's public health system has delivered disease control services through primarily vertical health programmes, such as the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP). While this vertical nature has allowed for concentrated focus and brought benefits in many ways, it has also been limiting. Integration of TB services within the broader public health system is key to India's pursuit of equitable, universal health coverage (UHC) for all.

Decentralising TB care for all

The ambitious Ayushman Bharat National Health Protection Scheme was launched in India in 2018 to provide UHC for the Indian population. Today, TB has been integrated within both key components of Ayushman Bharat: the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), considered the world's largest insurance scheme, and the Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAMs, formerly known as Health and Wellness Centres), which provide a comprehensive basket of primary health-care services in rural and urban India.

From the perspective of a person with TB symptoms, the best experience would be accessing consistently high-quality services at the first point of contact. The integration of TB services at the AAM primary care level is designed to meet this need, bringing together diagnostic, treatment and preventive care under one umbrella. AAMs serve as sputum collection centres, where people with TB symptoms can give samples for testing. The NTEP has also been optimising sample collection and transportation methods through a diagnostics network optimisation exercise. A person diagnosed with TB at a secondary or tertiary care facility can undergo treatment at the health centre closest to their residence, again minimising time and costs. In the first two months when people with TB are weak and drop outs as well as mortality is highest, community health officers positioned at the AAMs and their teams must be trained to identify and refer such patients for admission.

> Integration of TB services within the broader public health system is key to India's pursuit of equitable, universal health coverage for all

While TB services have been free within the public health system, over 50% of all people with TB symptoms continue to seek care in the private sector. Uneven standards of care across the vastly heterogeneous private health sector has led to delays in diagnosis and contributed to poor outcomes as well as significant out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE) for families. It is imperative to strengthen referrals from the private to the public health system, particularly for those who cannot afford to incur substantial expenditure on health and who may not be aware that TB services are freely available in the public health system. It is equally essential to ensure that the AB-PMJAY provides full insurance coverage for those who seek care for TB in the private or public sector, particularly those who are severely ill.

Equitable and decentralised care for all

What does the road to equitable TB care look like? There are five key steps we can take to accelerate our progress towards TB elimination and universal health coverage (UHC).

First, while we work to achieve decentralisation, we must strengthen person-centred care approaches, and deliver them at scale. There have been model interventions in several States that have assessed people with TB for social and clinical vulnerabilities and linked them to care. In Tamil Nadu, the Tamil Nadu Kasanoi Erappila Thittam (TN-KET), or "TB death-free project", has been successful in achieving reduced TB mortality through a robust system of identifying those most vulnerable or sick, and referring them for a brief period of admission. Similarly, there have been other interventions focusing on tribal communities, migrants, and homeless populations. One clear pathway to achieving UHC and increased utilisation of the public health system is by strengthening investment in the traditional 'inputs' for health and streamlining their functioning – human resources, supplies and infrastructure.

Second, we must develop mechanisms to recognise intersectionalities. Multiple factors such as gender, age, caste, disability, socio-economic status, and occupation determine health seeking intent and access to health and TB services. The intersection of these aspects of identity can both positively and adversely impact TB outcomes. The NTEP has adopted the national framework for a gender-responsive approach to TB, recognising that women, men, and LGBTQIA persons experience TB differently. Improving understanding of gender will take time, and inevitably challenge personal behaviours and norms, but is essential to equitable care. Similarly, there has been some early work to better understand TB and disability, which must be built upon.

Third, integrated care remains a challenge for India's health system, as we continue to build our primary care services. How do we ensure that someone who comes with TB symptoms is tested for Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or asthma? How can a person with TB be screened for depression or hypertension and linked to appropriate services and counselling? We must adopt models of integrated general health screening in community settings, for example, test for TB and COPD through validated Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled chest x-rays and upfront molecular testing, along with screening of common non-communicable diseases through blood pressure, blood glucose, and body mass index (BMI) monitoring.

Fourth, UHC approaches are centred around minimising OOPE, thereby eliminating health-related debt. Schemes such as the NPY have helped alleviate the financial burden on families, by providing monetary support for access to nutritious food. Case-finding approaches, such as the ongoing '100 Days' campaign, can help reduce OOPE prior to diagnosis. However, there are still several significant indirect costs that remain. Expanding social protection by extending nutrition support to the family, piloting wage-loss schemes to offset a loss of income during TB treatment and introducing livelihood programmes for TB survivors are potential future actions.

Lessons from COVID-19, communication

Finally, equity in terms of access to information and knowledge is critical. TB remains severely misunderstood. Recall how swiftly we were able to ensure public understanding of COVID-19, through a flood of science-based information using a multitude of platforms. We need similar approaches for TB, to encourage people to seek care and adopt simple measures to reduce transmission within homes and communities. Promoting knowledge about drug-resistant TB, in the context of growing anti-microbial resistance (AMR) is vital. Decimating TB stigma is critical to ensuring early detection and successful treatment outcomes for people with TB.

An equitable TB programme is one where every individual receives the highest quality of person-centred care that takes into account individual needs. Equity is a cornerstone of health care, and is essential to achieving TB elimination and universal health coverage. India's TB response is well poised to define global standards and benchmarks. Applying the equity lens will only accelerate our progress.

Imagining a 360° and comprehensive TB care response

Dr. Ramya Ananthakrishnan

is the Director of the Resource Group for Education and Advocacy for Community Health (REACH), a non-profit organisation working on tuberculosis for over 25 years

Anupama Srinivasan

is Deputy Director, REACH and a member of the 2024-25 India WomenLift Health cohort

Rani had had a cough for over 10 days. Cough syrups and antibiotics had not made her feel any better. Her doctor advised her to test for Tuberculosis (TB). A shocked Rani reluctantly gave her sputum sample for testing, which confirmed that it was drug-sensitive TB.

Her doctor assured her that TB was curable and advised Rani to eat a protein-rich diet, test for diabetes and HIV and get her family tested for TB. Rani informed her supervisor at work, who gave her time off work. She began a medicine regimen every day until she was cured. Later, she met several TB survivors who had inspired her, and she also chose to speak about her own TB experience.

Every segment must work

Rani's journey is what the ideal care pathway for TB care can and ought to look like in India. But for Rani to have this seamless experience, the complex machinery that works behind the scenes must be efficient. Every piece has to be in place, as in the case of Rani, even one missing element could have changed the course of her life.

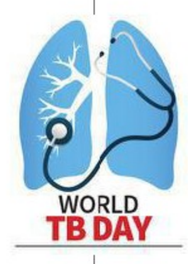
What if her doctor had not suggested that she test for TB? She might have gone from one doctor to another awaiting diagnosis. She could have been too terrified to inform her family – when she did, they blamed her and were unwilling to begin any preventive therapy. Rani's supervisor was understanding, but what if the person had turned hostile and fired her?

Rani could have also stopped taking her medicines when she developed side effects. The medicines were in short supply, so she would have had to travel over 20 kilometres every few days to replenish the supply. As this was strenuous, she may have had to approach a local pharmacy, but this would have mean running out of money soon. Rani could have been shunned by her neighbours, or she may have been malnourished, an elderly person or had a disability, all of which could have worsened her TB experience.

> There needs to be a tapestry of system and community-level actions with a focus on people with TB

TB is a simple, yet complex, disease impacting a person's physical and mental health. Stigma, loneliness and self-blame are common factors that people with TB face and experience. TB is a disease that dismantles social networks and disrupts economic progress, but cannot be cured by medicines alone, however essential. This is the single biggest lesson that TB survivors have taught the world.

At a macro level, there are issues about TB. Despite it being an airborne disease, there is a larger problem of insularity and persistent apathy, driven by the notion that it is a disease of the poor. Those of us who work deeply with TB care, know this well. There are too few of us and inadequate to tackle the scale of the crisis. How do we get everyone to care about TB and convince them that they have a stake in this fight?



What is needed

Most critical in all this is a resilient public health system, with dedicated human resources in place, an uninterrupted supply of commodities and drugs and the ability to transition from 'one-size-fits-all' care to person-centred care that is responsive to clinical, social and economic vulnerabilities. We need well-trained and compensated health workers to deliver care, which includes treatment literacy and psychosocial support (underestimated but critical). We need empowered communities, that are led by TB survivors, to advocate on behalf of people with TB and tackle discrimination. We need feedback loops to improve the quality of care. We need newer tools for point-of-care testing. Within the private health care system, better quality of care is key. To prevent TB, we need to improve airborne infection control, improve nutritional status and make available an effective vaccine for all.

Our responsibilities do not end at cure. We must understand the needs of TB survivors and provide follow-up care. All of this must be backed by gender-responsive, data-driven planning and decision-making.

What needs to be done

The most efficient health sector cannot end TB by itself. We need multisectoral action. We need more Champions who are able to say they had TB and motivate other people with TB. TB needs to be integrated within social and private insurance schemes. Our elected representatives must include TB on their agendas. We need an 'aware media' which is willing to spotlight TB.

Corporate India must prioritise TB control and be more open to investing corporate social responsibility resources. In the long run, we need viable social business models for TB care that transcend public-private partnerships.

In India, many of these aspects are part of the National Strategic Plan and operational to varying degrees. But if we are serious about ending TB, we cannot afford to pick and choose. Every single element is essential and can directly determine whether Rani, and others like her, are able to get a quick diagnosis and get cured. Every actor has a specific role in this ecosystem and must work in synergy to dismantle apathy. We will not reduce suffering and deaths due to TB if we do not build this tapestry of system and community-level actions that firmly place the needs of people with TB in the front and centre.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Delimitation meet

The apprehensions of the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister that the delimitation exercise based on population would ultimately result in a loss of political strength and bargaining power with the Centre as far as funds are concerned are totally unwarranted and without basis in the absence of any basic data. When the Centre has not announced and started the process of delimitation, there is a non-availability of Census data and no process has commenced by the Centre, and, above all, the Home Minister has said that the southern States will not be affected, the meeting and the resolution passed by the Joint Action Committee on Fair Delimitation are just drama and a waste of money. The meeting only strengthens the perception that the meet is to divert attention from scams and the deterioration of law and order in the State.

G.R. Nagarajan,
Madurai

Trust in India's judiciary

The statement by a former Chief Justice of India is alarming ("Citizens are losing trust in Indian judiciary, says former CJI, Ramana", March 23), as it highlights critical issues — from citizens losing trust in the judiciary, to the language barrier in proceedings. It is disheartening that people in high positions often voice their apprehensions only after retirement. This pattern creates unnecessary chaos and fear. Having served in the Supreme Court for long, including as the CJI, one would have expected him to take steps to find solutions for a few of these challenges during his tenure. The judiciary is one of the four pillars of our democracy, and ensuring its efficiency and accessibility should be a continuous effort — not a post-retirement reflection. A proactive approach from those in power is essential to uphold trust in and strengthen our judicial system.

Dr. H. Mohamed Zakir,
Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

'Social stigma is a reality even today'

Himani Verma from Chhattisgarh, Kailash Chandra Mishra from Odisha, G. Poongodi from Tamil Nadu (T.N.), and Sudeshwar Kumar Singh from Bihar are all Tuberculosis (TB) survivors-turned-champions, which means they are actively working to support communities affected by TB. They are founding members of their respective State-level TB survivor-led networks. These are excerpts from interviews with them:

Tell us your experience with TB. How did it affect your life?

Himani: I had TB when I was in Class 12. I stopped meeting my friends, and my family did not share my TB status with others. In 2018, when I first attended the TB survivor to TB Champion training, my perspective changed.

Kailash: When I was diagnosed with TB, I was studying in school. TB impacted my studies a lot.

Sudeshwar: I was working in the social sector and thought of TB as just another disease. But things changed when my family learnt about my condition. At home the social pressure was overwhelming.

Poongodi: I'm from a village in Vellore, T.N. My father is a farmer. I found out I had TB after three pregnancies, all of which ended in loss. When my husband and his family came to know that I had TB, I faced constant verbal and physical abuse. In 2013, I was diagnosed with TB for the third time and it was drug-resistant.

Who is a TB Champion, what do TB Champions do, and why do we need them?

Himani: A TB survivor is one who has defeated TB. A TB Champion is one who helps others fight TB. The TB Programme provides free diagnosis and treatment. But people with TB need counselling. They need someone who can listen to them and confidentially answer their questions. Our personal stories give confidence to those who are seeking TB care.

Anupama Srinivasan

is Deputy Director, REACH and a member of the 2024-25 India WomenLift Health cohort

Kailash: A person with TB is vulnerable and anxious and wonders 'what will happen to me and my family, and how will I complete such a long treatment?' As TB Champions, we provide psychosocial support to them.

Do people with TB experience stigma today?

Sudeshwar: Social stigma is a reality even today. Recently, a doctor in Patna called me. His household help was diagnosed with TB and he wanted to send her back to her village. Whenever we do a community awareness programme, we share our phone numbers because they don't ask us anything during the meeting. Sometimes they stay back and talk to us alone. People call up and enquire about the facilities and how to initiate diagnosis.

Poongodi: Even today, when I eat, my father is the only one who sits with me and shares a meal. My sister either eats at a distance or skips meals with me altogether. Two years ago, a woman in my village was diagnosed with TB and became severely ill. Her family built a small hut for her outside their home. She died soon after.

Tell us a little about what your network has done so far.

Himani: We have grown from 30 people to over 400 in the TB Mukt Chhattisgarh Foundation network. We do advocacy work for improvement in TB care and services.

Kailash: The Kalinga TB Survivors Network in Odisha began working in 2018. We have 14 district chapters and more than 800 members. We recently mobilised funds and set up a grocery store for the family of a person with TB who was paralysed. His son who had left school was able to start studying again.

Sudeshwar: Currently, as TB Mukt Vahini, we are active in 35 districts of Bihar. We became the first registered network in India and have been able to support over 80,000 people with TB.

Poongodi: We launched our network in 2022 with a small group of TB survivors from six districts of Tamil Nadu. Today, we are 2,000-strong. We identified that many people with TB were malnourished. Through local donors, we mobilised nutritional supplements for those who needed it most.

If you were in-charge of the TB programme for a day, what are the policy changes that you would change or introduce?

Himani: We still use smear microscopy for TB testing which delays the diagnosis – rapid diagnosis like CBNAAT must be offered upfront. I would also like to add transportation costs in the Nikshay Poshan Yojana.

Kailash: Nutrition support is given to the person with TB. If they are the head of the family and 4-5 family members are dependent on them, who will take care of their nutrition? I would make some policy-level changes here. For the diagnosis of TB, several tests have to be done and they are all in different places in the facility. If all of them can be done in one place at the hospital, it will be a game changer.

Sudeshwar: I will strengthen the turnaround time for various aspects from diagnosis to treatment initiation. Like COVID-19, TB needs a campaign with multi-sectoral action.

Poongodi: I will appoint one male and one female TB Champion in each block. There is no proper space for the TB programme in most hospitals, and no privacy. I will construct a separate building for TB in each district.

A TB survivor is one who has defeated TB. A TB Champion is one who helps others fight TB.

Towards better TB control

Re-imagining public-private partnerships for TB

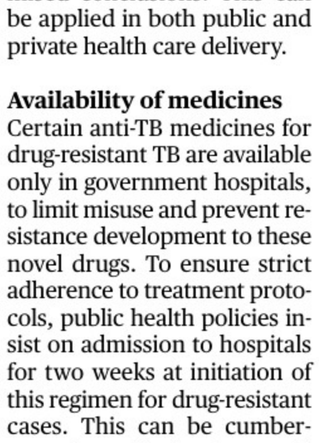
V. Ramasubramanian

With an estimated 2.8 million new cases a year, India contributes to more than 25% of the world's Tuberculosis (TB) burden. More than half the TB patients in India seek private medical care. The current system of treatment of TB is confined to either public hospitals where treatment is given free but in an ambience which may not be welcoming, or in private hospitals where affordability is a major concern but the ambience is more welcoming.

Public and private care

Government hospitals can offer a standardised clinical algorithm and facilities for contact tracing. Yet, the patients feel that free treatments may not be of optimal quality both with regard to the drug bioavailability and the testing processes. On the other hand, private practitioners may offer a better ambience and better comforts during treatment, but may not adhere to standardised protocols for treatment. Also, patient monitoring may also be compromised in private hospitals, which do not have the bandwidth to ensure compliance and follow-up.

As we stride towards the World Health Organization's goals of ending TB, we need to think of innovations in TB care – that is, with regard to diagnosis as well as treatment. To balance the faults of the system, we need a strong and sustained drive to encourage public-private partnerships in the management of TB patients. This not only helps the patients by giving them a choice in treatment options, but also guarantees better outcomes as the patients are more at ease with the process. There is a shared responsibility between the public and private health agencies to ensure compliance and follow-up.



This modified paradigm of healthcare delivery, which incorporates the best of both worlds, is probably the answer to TB elimination. This offers a choice in services for the patient without compromising on the outcomes. Diagnostic pathways should be clearly defined through evidence-based protocols, limiting individual variations and compromised conclusions. This can be applied in both public and private health care delivery.

Availability of medicines

Certain anti-TB medicines for drug-resistant TB are available only in government hospitals, to limit misuse and prevent resistance development to these novel drugs. To ensure strict adherence to treatment protocols, public health policies insist on admission to hospitals for two weeks at initiation of this regimen for drug-resistant cases. This can be cumbersome for patients who would benefit from the use of these novel medicines but are not willing to be admitted in government hospitals. Follow-up of patients is optimal in government hospitals where free medicines are given and patients can access social workers when in need. Hence, a collaboration between the two systems with flexibility in care pathways and access to medicines, while reiterating that the basic diagnostic and treatment tenets are not compromised, will benefit patients.

The way forward

The problems of establishing contact and ensuring smooth transition of patient care should be addressed. Issues on accountability have to be established. The logistics of cooperation need to be better defined to ensure that patients do not slip through the cracks in the system. There are issues of unregistered practitioners treating TB. We need a system that warrants that the diagnosis is made based on standard definitions and testing methods. There must be regulation of supply of drugs, adherence to drug administration protocols, and optimal follow-up.

The future of TB treatment should involve the regulation of laboratories. Clinical details should accompany submission of specimens for TB testing. All TB diagnostic test results should be reported to a cell which can coordinate and monitor the results. There should also be systems to monitor pharmacies which sell TB medicines and give feedback to treating doctors through an expert committee.

There is no single way for success. Re-imagining partnerships, disrupting accepted norms, and reframing problems can all offer better directions and pathways for success in TB control.

V. Ramasubramanian is Consultant, Infectious Diseases, Apollo Hospital

TB treatment success rates are improving gradually in India

Among major States Himachal Pradesh, Odisha and Gujarat are performing better in the fight against TB

DATA POINT

The Hindu Data Team

Tuberculosis incidence in India was below the 200 per lakh mark in 2022 compared to over 237 per lakh in 2015 – a 16% decline **(Chart 1)**.

Similarly, TB mortality was 23 per lakh population – an 18% decline compared to 2015 **(Chart 2)**.

The treatment success rate for severely drug-resistant TB – forms of TB resistant to isoniazid, rifampicin, any fluoroquinolone, and at least one second-line injectable drug – was the lowest among all types of TB at 45% in India in 2021. The treatment rate for MDR/RR-TB – resistant to rifampicin, the most powerful first-line drug, with or without resistance to isoniazid – was 74%.

The success rate for Pre-XDR-TB – a form of MDR-TB that is also resistant to any fluoroquinolone, an important class of second-line drugs – was 68% in 2021. **Chart 3** shows the treatment success rates of various types of TB. As the graph shows, treatment success rates have improved over time.

The TB index **(Map 4)**, which measures the performance of States in the fight against TB, shows that among major States, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha and Gujarat are on top. Among major States, Punjab, Bihar and Karnataka are at the bottom.

In India, over 10% of the population faces catastrophic health expenditure – the third highest among 14 lower-middle-income countries with a high TB burden. Health spending is termed catastrophic if it exceeds 10% of a household's income or consumption.

In India, just over 60% of the population has health coverage – the third highest among lower-middle-income countries. Yet, a larger share of households still faces steep health costs **(Chart 5).**

A marked improvemet

The charts were sourced from Central Tuberculosis Division's 'India TB Report 2024' and World Health Organisation's 'Global tuberculosis report 2024'

Charts 1 and 2 compare the estimates from WHO's Global Tuberculosis Report 2022 for India (interim) and the in-country model (India) – (2015–22)

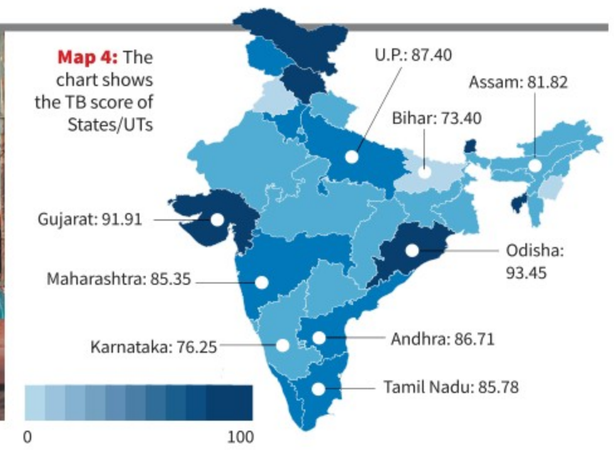


Chart 1: The chart shows the incidence of TB per lakh population

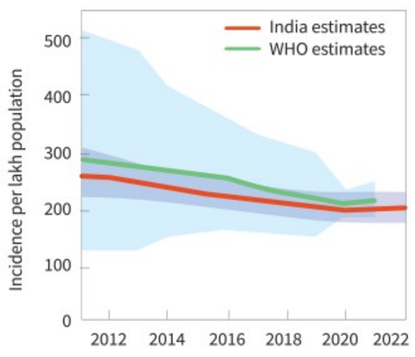


Chart 2: The chart shows the TB mortality per lakh population

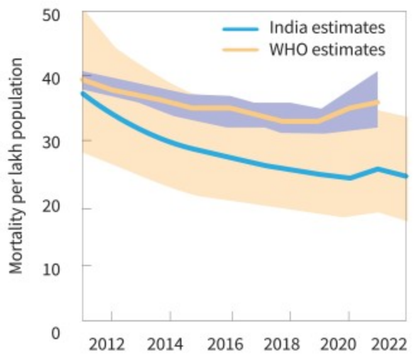
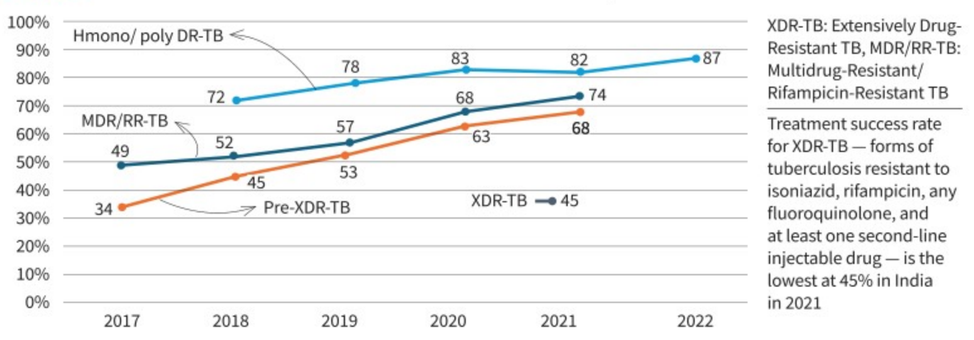


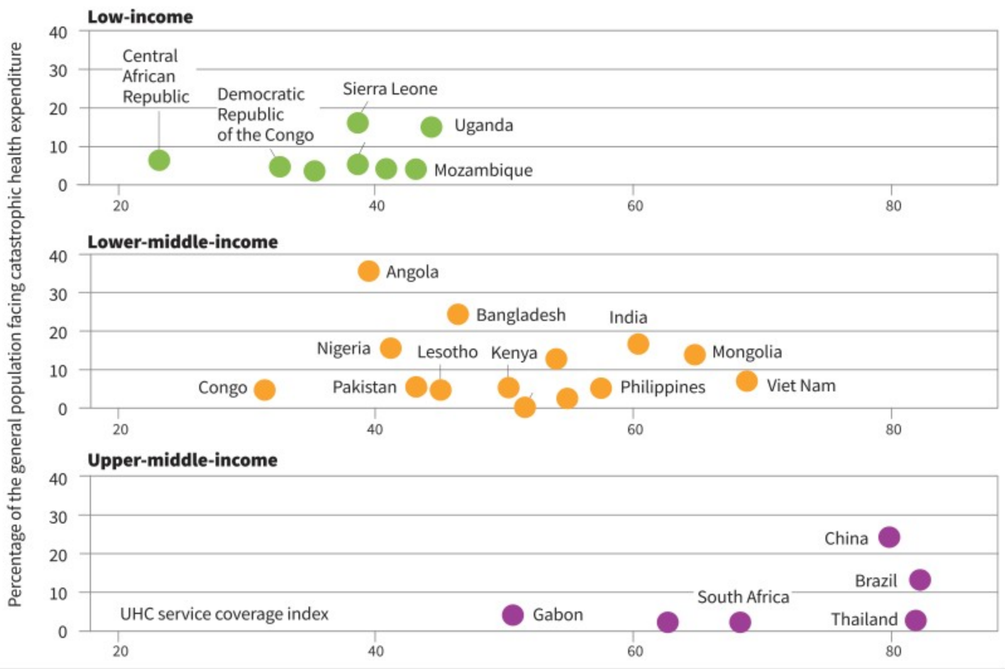
Chart 3: The chart shows the trend of treatment success rate of M/XDR-TB patients



XDR-TB: Extensively Drug-Resistant TB, MDR/RR-TB: Multidrug-Resistant/ Rifampicin-Resistant TB

Treatment success rate for XDR-TB — forms of tuberculosis resistant to isoniazid, rifampicin, any fluoroquinolone, and at least one second-line injectable drug — is the lowest at 45% in India in 2021

Chart 5: The chart shows the universal health coverage service index and percentage of the general population facing catastrophic health expenditure in the 30 high TB burden countries, stratified by income groups.



1 Tuberculosis incidence in India has declined below the 200 per lakh mark in 2022, compared to over 237 per lakh in 2015 — a 16% decline

2 The TB mortality was 23 per lakh population with 18% decline as compared to 2015 (28 per lakh population)

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 24, 1975

Farakka barrage to be commissioned soon

New Delhi, March 23: The Union Government has tentatively decided to commission "soon" the Farakka Barrage, notwithstanding some doubts raised by the Bangladesh team at the talks here in February last.

Sources close to the Union Irrigation Ministry do not forsee any difficulty in implementing the decision and they do not think that Bangladesh will put any obstacles.

The Barrage has taken nearly 12 years to complete and over Rs.130 crores have been spent on its construction. The doubts, raised by the Bangladesh team headed by the Minister for Flood Control and Water Resources during the recent Delhi discussions in which Mr. Jagjivan Ram, Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation, took part for the first time, are not new. It has been the endeavour of the Union Government all along to remove the suspicions of the erstwhile East Pakistan Government and now the Bangladesh Government, that the Farakka Barrage will harm the interests of their country.

There is no question of the recent talks on the Ganga waters between the two countries having failed to produce an acceptable solution.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 24, 1925

Publications prohibited in India

Karl Winterton, Under-Secretary for India, in reply to a question in the House of Commons by Mr. Lansbury, said that Hyndman's "The Awakening of Asia", Bryan's "British Rule in India", Mr. M.N. Roy's "Evolution of Economic Organisation of India", and Lala Lajput Rai's "England's debt to India", had been prohibited entry into India by notifications under the Sea Customs Act. The reason in the case of three of them was that the publications contained false and malicious misrepresentations of the British Administration in India. Roy's book was proscribed because all his writings and those of his wife here were prohibited, in view of their complicity in a foreign organised conspiracy to overthrow British rule in India.

From Page One

CJI seeks details of guards at Justice Varma's house

A separate communication in Hindi said four or five sacks of half-burnt currency notes were found in the gutted room. A similar second communication quoted what the security guard allegedly witnessed.

But the published documents, which have redacted portions whose publication may impinge on confidentiality or fairness, do not inform about the identity of the person(s) who removed the articles from the room on March 15 morning. They do not reveal who had taken the videos and photographs showing the residues of what may be currency notes. They do not mention whether the police had immediately sealed the room, a measure which may have prevented access to it following the fire and the dousing operation.

The location of the remnants of the burnt currency notes and whether it was seized or not have also not been mentioned in the Delhi High Court Chief Justice's published report. The report also does not mention if there is an investigation under way into what caused the fire or if CCTV footage was recovered.

Justice Varma, in his response, has said he has no knowledge of cash lying in that room.

He has strongly rejected "the insinuation, if made, that we removed currency. None of my staff removed any article, currency or cash in any form".

The published records show different stands on whether the storeroom, located adjacent to the Central Reserve Police Force guard room, was "used to be kept locked", as stated in the Police Commissioner's report.

Justice Varma has countered that the storeroom was "utilised generally by all and sundry" to store unused household articles as well as (Central Public Works Department) CPWD material. The room was disconnected from the main residence. "It was surely not a room in my house," he said.

The Registrar-cum-Secretary attached to the Delhi Chief Justice, who visited the room along with Justice Varma on the night of March 15, in his report said the private secretary of the judge informed him that the room was not kept locked.

In his concluding remarks recommending a deeper probe, Chief Justice Upadhyaya reported that his inquiry, *prima facie*, did not reveal the possibility of entry or access to the room by any person other than those residing in the bungalow, the servants, the gardeners and CPWD personnel. This may lead to a presumption that the room was not accessible to a rank outsider.

Security forces recover 'heroin' from office of Manipur radical group

Recovery of the banned substance came after a clash between members of Arambai Tenggol and those of the Pambei faction of the UNLF, which signed a ceasefire agreement in 2023

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

A fight between two groups in Manipur's Imphal Valley led to the recovery of a heroin-like substance on March 22.

The security forces recovered 15 grams of suspected heroin from an office of Arambai Tenggol (AT) during a raid, the Manipur Police said on the social media platform X.

A Meitei radical group, the AT emerged during the ethnic conflict that erupted between the tribal Kuki-Zo and the Meitei people in May 2023 in Manipur.

The recovery of the 'heroin' followed a clash between suspected AT members and those of the Pambei faction of the extremist United National Liberation Front, or UNLF (P), which signed a ceasefire agreement with the Union government in November 2023.

The police said a group of about 20 suspected AT members entered the residence of Irengbam Nandakumar Singh, an alleged UNLF(P) functionary, at a locality in Imphal on Saturday, leading to a fight.

The police also said reports of firing by both groups were received.

The security forces, however, found four UNLF(P) members with injuries caused by blunt objects. "They were detained and taken to a hospital for treatment," the police said.

The security forces raided an Arambai Tenggol office in the Khurai area and recovered incriminating articles such as bulletproof jackets and 15 gm of a substance suspected to be heroin. X/@MANIPUR_POLICE

No arrests so far

Later in the day, the security forces raided an office of the AT in the Khurai area and recovered incriminating articles, including bulletproof jackets and 15 grams of a substance suspected to be heroin. Reports said no member of the outfit has been arrested so far.

The AT surrendered 246 weapons along with ammunition on February 27 in response to Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla's call soon after the imposition of President's Rule in Manipur.

On Saturday, the security forces recovered an array of weapons during operations across Kakching, Kangpokpi, Senapati, and Thoubal districts.

The weapons included the 'Pompi', a handmade machine gun, and country-made projectile launchers.

Meanwhile, the Manipur Police registered six first information reports (FIRs) against WhatsApp groups and social media channels for spreading "fake and inflammatory news, thereby creating and promoting fear, panic, and public alarm within the Churachandpur district".

'Legal action'

In a statement, the police warned of legal action against other channels spreading fake or inflammatory news.

NIA chargesheets 4 'BKI operatives' in grenade attack case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed a chargesheet against four alleged Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) operatives, including one based in Pakistan and another in the U.S., in connection with the 2024 Chandigarh grenade attack case.

Among those arraigned in the chargesheet are Pakistan-based "designated individual terrorist" Harwinder Singh Sandhu, alias Rinda, and U.S.-based Harpreet Singh, alias Happy Passia. The agency has accused them of being associated with the banned terror outfit. The other two have been identified as Rohan Masih and Vishal Masih.

"The two terrorists were the primary handlers and conspirators behind the attack. They had provided logistical support, terror funds, weapons, and ammunition to India-based... operatives in Chandigarh for executing the grenade attack," said the NIA. The agency has alleged that the September 2024 attack was intended to target a retired officer of the Punjab Police, who the assailants believed to be the occupant of the marked house.

"Investigations revealed that Rinda, along with Happy Passia, had orchestrated the conspiracy to strike terror among law enforcement officials and the general public through the grenade attack, as part of the broader aim to promote BKI's terrorist agenda. They had recruited local operatives, namely Rohan Masih and Vishal Masih, who were tasked with carrying out the attack under their direct instructions."

It is alleged that Rinda and Happy Passia directed the other accused, Rohan Masih and Vishal Masih, to conduct reconnaissance on the target twice before hurling the grenade.

In the chargesheet filed before a special NIA court (Chandigarh), all four accused persons have been charged under multiple Sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the Explosive Substances Act, and other related provisions.

Himachal buses facing attacks in Punjab: Agnihotri

SHIMLA

In the wake of sporadic attacks on Himachal Pradesh buses in Punjab and scribbling of pro-Khalistani slogans on them, Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri said Saturday that they will not be parked in Punjab at night until the Aam Aadmi Party dispensation ensures their safety and that of passengers. He said the department is in contact with HRTC bus staff and has informed higher authorities. "We think that until the Punjab government assures us of their safety, the buses will not be parked at night in Punjab. Buses would be brought back to Himachal borders," he added.

Indian-origin man, his daughter shot dead in U.S.

Press Trust of India
NEW YORK

A 56-year-old Indian-origin man and his 24-year-old daughter were shot dead at a convenience store in the U.S. state of Virginia and the police have arrested one person in connection with the shooting, according to media reports.

Pradipkumar Patel and his daughter were working at the store on Lankford Highway in Accomack County when the shooting incident happened.

The Accomack County Sheriff's office said deputies were called to the scene shortly after 5.30 a.m. on March 20 on reports of a shooting victim, media report said.

When they arrived, deputies discovered an unresponsive man suffering from apparent gunshot wounds, it said. While searching the building, they found a woman suffering from apparent gunshot wounds as well.

The man was pronounced dead at the scene. The woman was transported to the hospital, where she died of her injuries, the report said.

Accomack County Sheriffs announced late Thursday that they arrested a man in connection with the shooting. George Frazier Devon Wharton, 44, is currently held in Accomack jail without bond, according to Sheriff W. Todd Wessells. He was charged with first-degree murder, attempted first-degree murder, possession of a firearm by a felon, and two counts of use of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

A motive for the shooting was not revealed.

Sambhal mosque committee chief arrested in violence case of 2024

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Police on Sunday arrested Zafar Ali, president of the managing committee of Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal, in connection with the violence that erupted during the survey of the mosque on November 24, 2024.

"We had gathered evidence that he played an incendiary role during the violence last year. He was picked up by the police from his house in Sambhal Sunday morning and was interrogated at Kotwali police station by senior officials before being finally arrested," said Krishna Kumar, Superintendent of Police (SP), Sambhal.

While being taken into custody for questioning, Mr. Ali told presspersons that he had not incited any violence. His supporters held a demonstration and sought his immediate release.

Turn of events: The police take Zafar Ali, president, Masjid management committee, into custody in Sambhal on Sunday. PTI

The action against Mr. Ali had been anticipated since Sunday morning, given that teams of the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) and Rapid Action Force (RAF) were stationed around the 16th-century mosque and near Mr. Ali's home, which are hardly 100 metres apart.

Mr. Ali has been at the forefront of the dispute since last year's violence. During a press conference, he had also said that the Sambhal police had fired shots to contain the crowd and killed a few people in the process.

Sambhal witnessed violence on November 24, the second day of the Shahi Jama Masjid survey that was being carried out upon orders by a local court. Protesters who had gathered around the mosque clashed with the police, leading to heavy stone-throwing. The protesters alleged that the police had opened fire at the crowd. Five persons died and several were injured during the protest.

Later, the Supreme Court directed the Sambhal trial court to halt proceedings in the case and also the survey. The police have arrested over 50 people in the case.

Indian-origin woman in U.S. charged with murder of 11-year-old son in California

Press Trust of India
NEW YORK

An Indian-origin woman has been charged with allegedly murdering her 11-year-old son after a three-day vacation to Disneyland.

Saritha Ramaraju, 48, has been charged with one felony count of murder for slitting her son's throat, after they went on a vacation during a custody visit. She has also been charged with one felony enhancement of personal use of a weapon, a knife.

She faces a maximum sentence of 26 years to life if convicted on all charges, a statement from the Office of the District Attorney, Orange County, California said on March 21.

Saritha Ramaraju

Ms. Ramaraju, who moved out of California after divorcing the boy's father in 2018, was staying with her son at a motel in Santa Ana for a custody visit. She bought three-day passes to Disneyland for herself and her son.

On March 19, the day Ms. Ramaraju was scheduled to check out of the motel and return the boy to his father, she called 911 at 9.12 a.m. to report that she had killed her son and taken pills to kill herself.

The Santa Ana Police arrived at the motel and found the young boy dead on the bed in a room. It appeared the boy had been dead for several hours before his mother called 911, the statement said. The boy was scheduled to be returned to his father that day. A large kitchen knife was found inside the motel room purchased the day before. Ms. Ramaraju was released from the hospital on Thursday after ingesting the unknown substance and arrested on suspicion of stabbing the boy to death.

India imposes anti-dumping duty on five products from China for up to five years

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India has imposed anti-dumping duty on five Chinese goods to protect domestic players from cheap imports from the neighbouring country.

These duties were imposed as these products – soft ferrite cores, a certain thickness of vacuum insulated flask, aluminium foil, trichloro isocyanuric acid, and poly vinyl chloride paste resin – were exported to India from China at below normal prices.

Duties were imposed as these products were exported at below normal prices

In separate notifications, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, Department of Revenue, said that the duty imposed "shall be levied for a period of five years" on imports of soft ferrite cores, the flasks, and the acid.

The anti-dumping duty of up to $873 per tonne was imposed provisionally on aluminium foil for six months.

The government has imposed a duty in the range of $276 per tonne to $986 per tonne on imports of the acid (a water treatment chemical) from China and Japan.

On imports of soft ferrite cores, up to 35% duty was imposed on CIF (cost, insurance, freight) value. On a vacuum-insulated flask, $1,732 per tonne anti-dumping duty was levied. The levy, which ranges from $89 per tonne to $707 per tonne, on the Resin was slapped on the imports for five years.

Heavy rush at New Delhi Railway Station but no stampede: officials

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Heavy passenger congestion due to a delay in the departure of multiple trains led to chaos at the New Delhi Railway Station on Sunday but there was no "stampede" or injuries as the police stepped in and managed the situation, a police official said.

A source said large crowds had gathered on platform numbers 12 and 13 of the station due to the delay in the departure of the Shiv Ganga Express, Swatantrata Senani Express, Jammu Rajdhani Express, Lucknow Mail, and the Magadh Express.

Narrow escape: Heavy rush at the New Delhi Railway Station on Sunday. The police, however, managed the situation. PTI

As the rush increased, necessary crowd control measures were promptly taken to avoid any kind of untoward incidents, a senior police officer said.

'Situation was better'

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Railways) KPS Malhotra said, "There was some extra crowd and rush, but no stampede took place. A little later, a few trains left, and the situation was better. Nobody has been injured..."

In February, 18 people, including women and children, were killed after a stampede broke out at the railway station as passengers waited to board trains to go to the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj.

Cong. calls for repeal of amendment to Data Protection Act

In a letter to Vaishnaw, Jairam says it destroys the RTI Act by prohibiting the disclosure of personal information even if there is public interest

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

> In the interests of transparency and accountability, I would urge you to pause, review and repeal Section 44 (3) of the Data Protection Act which destroys RTI Act
>
> **JAIRAM RAMESH**
> Congress leader

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Sunday told Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw that an amendment leading to the "destruction" of the Right to Information Act, 2005 should be repealed.

In a letter to Mr. Vaishnaw, Mr. Ramesh excerpted the original text of Section 8(1)(j) the RTI Act which allows citizens to apply with public authorities for information that is personal in nature as long as there is public interest in doing so. In the excerpt, Mr. Ramesh struck through the text that the amendment had deleted.

The Section of the 2005 law "that gives citizens equal right to information as legislators who represent them is totally eliminated", Mr. Ramesh said.

Over 30 civil society bodies have raised alarm about the amendment, which has been enacted through the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, but not yet notified – the law requires the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, which are currently in draft stage, to be published in the Gazette of India, giving activists and the Opposition some time to push back on the change.

The previous form of the amendment allowed for public authorities to disclose personal information – such as copies of ledgers of subsidy beneficiaries – if there was a "larger public interest" justifying their release. But the amendment effectively prohibits the disclosure of any personal information.

Mr. Vaishnaw has argued that the Supreme Court's 2017 judgment affirming the right to privacy had anyway rendered Section 8(1)(j)'s wiggle room "infructuous". But activists have ferociously pushed back against that argument saying the RTI Act had already made a conscious balance between personal privacy and the right to information. Mr. Vaishnaw insisted that personal information that is anyway required to be proactively published by other laws will continue to be available – essentially allowing public authorities to curate what personal information is released in public interest.

"In the interests of transparency and accountability, I would urge you to pause, review and repeal Section 44 (3) of the Data Protection Act, 2023 which destroys the RTI Act, 2005," Mr. Ramesh wrote.

Khera targets Bihar govt. over law and order issues

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

Congress leader Pawan Khera on Sunday lashed out at the Nitish Kumar-led National Democratic Alliance government of Bihar over the issues of development and law and order.

Addressing pressperson, Mr. Khera said Bihar was the birthplace of satyagraha and revolution but the present government had betrayed the State in the past 20 years.

The Congress leader said, "Everyone is concerned about the health of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar but no one is concerned about the health of Bihar. More than half of the hospitals have shortage of doctors, nurses and medicines. There is a shortage of 86% specialist doctors and this is a government report, not that of the Congress."

Caste-based survey

"A conspiracy was hatched not to implement the benefits of caste-based survey and it got stuck in court case and it was deliberately ensured not to plead it before the court properly whereas Telangana implemented it. If Bihar has to change, then the government of Bihar has to be changed," the Congress leader said.

Muslim bodies boycott Bihar CM's Iftar event over his support to Waqf Bill

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

Annual event: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and others at the Iftar event in Patna on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Major Muslim outfits of Bihar have boycotted an Iftar party hosted by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar at his official residence in Patna on Sunday.

In a letter written by seven Muslims organisations to Mr. Kumar, they said the decision was taken as a protest against his party's support to the Waqf Amendment Bill.

The organisations include the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, Imarat-e-Sharia, Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, Jamiat Ahle Hadith, Jamal-e-Islami Hind, Khanqah Mujibia, and Khanqah Rahmani.

Their letter addressed to Mr. Kumar said, "You had come to power on the promise of secular government and protection of the rights of minorities, but your alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party and your support to the illogical and unconstitutional Waqf Amendment Bill is a blatant violation of your same promises."

The letter reads, "The purpose of your Iftar feast is to promote goodwill and trust, but trust is not built only by formal feasts but by concrete policy measures. Your government's ignoring of the legitimate demands of Muslims makes such formal feasts meaningless."

Explaining the disadvantages of the Waqf Amendment Bill, the letter said if this amendment was implemented, it would eliminate centuries-old waqf properties in educational institutions, hospitals, women's centres and religious places.

"This will further increase poverty and deprivation in the Muslim community as has already been stated in the Sachar Committee report," the letter said.

Key partner

The Janata Dal (United) is an important partner of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by the Bharatiya Janata Party at the Centre and Mr. Kumar's party is supporting the Waqf (Amendment) Bill emphasising that the Bill aimed to ensure transparency in Waqf Board operation and was not an attempt to interfere with mosques. The JD(U) had also said that the Bill was not anti-Muslim.

Despite the boycott, a large number of people from the Muslim community gathered at Mr. Kumar's residence to take part in the Iftar party. Union Minister Chirag Paswan, Bihar Governor Arif Mohammed Khan, BJP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary and other Cabinet colleagues were present.

Bihar Sunni Waqf Board Chairman Irshadullah termed the boycott unfortunate.

Waqf Bill an assault on the Constitution, says Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Mounting a scathing attack on the Narendra Modi government over the proposed changes to the Waqf Act, the Congress on Sunday accused the BJP of trying to "damage the centuries-old bonds of social harmony in our uniquely multi-religious society" through the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024.

"It bears recall that a 428-page report was literally bulldozed through the JPC without it ever having gone through a detailed clause-by-clause discussion. Most fundamentally, the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 is an assault on the Constitution of India itself," Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said.

The statement comes amid speculation that the government may bring the Waqf Bill for passage once the Finance Bill is passed in the coming week.

It attempts to "demonise minority communities by spreading false propaganda and creating prejudices, dilute Constitutional provisions that guarantee equal rights....and defame traditions and institutions of minority communities to keep our society in a state of permanent polarisation for electoral gains," he alleged.

'Curfew lifted from all areas, normalcy has returned in Nagpur'

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Surveillance will continue in all the sensitive zones, say police

Curfew was lifted from all areas of Nagpur on Sunday, restoring peace six days after communal violence broke out in the district, officials said.

"We have completely lifted the curfew. Normalcy has returned to Nagpur, and the situation is peaceful. A total of 13 cases were registered in connection with the incident, and 104 accused were arrested till Saturday," Nagpur Police Commissioner Ravinder Singal told *The Hindu*.

The curfew was imposed on March 17 following the violence in central Nagpur areas. Later, it was imposed in 11 police station areas where mixed populations (Hindu-Muslim communities) reside.

Violence flared in the city after rumours of burning of a 'chadar' with holy inscriptions spread during protests led by the VHP and the Bajrang Dal seeking removal of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's tomb located in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar district.

According to officials, the curfew was lifted in a phased manner. However, police patrolling and surveillance in all the sensitive zones will continue.

"We arrested at least 104 people and ensured that the losses would be recovered from the rioters. In case they fail, then their property will be sold off to pay the compensation," Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said in Nashik.

RSS says quota based on religion goes against Constitution

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing row over the tomb of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale on Sunday asked if iconising someone who was against the ethos of India was right.

He asked why those who advocate Ganga-Jamuni culture (fusion of Hindu and Islamic cultural elements) never thought of idolising Dara Shikoh, the elder brother of Aurangzeb who was said to be a pioneer of such an idea.

Mr. Hosabale's statement came just two days after RSS publicity incharge Sunil Ambekar said that Aurangzeb was irrelevant in today's context.

Asked about the Sangh's stand on the decision of the Karnataka government to provide a 4% reservation to Muslims in government contracts, Mr. Hosabale said that such reservations went against the Constitution.

"The courts have many times rejected such actions of the government calling them unconstitutional. Anyone taking such political steps is going against the purpose of the Constitution makers," he said.

Responding to a question on inter-caste marriages, he said that the Sangh had witnessed such marriages and that it had no problem with them.

भारत सरकार - अंतरिक्ष विभाग / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA - DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण समूह, एसडीएससी-शार / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP, SDSC-SHAR
श्रीहरिकोटा / नेल्लूर (जिला), आं.प्र. / SRIHARIKOTA - 524124

संक्षिप्त ई–निविदा सूचना / Brief E-TENDER NOTICE

सं.शार:सीएमजी सिविल: अनुरक्षण: ई–जन निविदा / No:SHAR:CMGCIVIL:MAINT:E-PT-22/24-25 तिथि/ Date. 21.03.2025

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से **"वर्ष 2025-26 (एक वर्ष के लिए) फेज-II क्षेत्र में जल आपूर्ति तथा निस्तरण यूनिटों के सिविल एवं जन स्वास्थ्य, प्रचालन तथा अनुरक्षण के लिए एएमसी"** (टी/सी–24-077, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 112.30 लाख), **"एसडीएससी शार के फेज-I एवं II क्षेत्र में 136 IV, VII, VIII के क्वार्टरों में क्षतिग्रस्त बढ़ईगिरी वस्तुओं को बदलना"** (टी/सी–24-078, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 52.78 लाख), **"सूल्लूरुपेट के एसएमएन, पीएनएन तथा पीसीएन कॉलोनियों में 100 रिक्त क्वार्टरों की तैयारी के लिए सिविल मरम्मत कार्य"** (टी/सी–24-079, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 45.76 लाख), **"एसडीएससी शार, क्यूसीएच, डंपिंग यार्ड के लिए कांटेदार तार की बाड़, गैलवैल्यूम शीट के साथ विभाजन, एमएस गेट, मलबे आदि से पहुंच मार्ग निर्माण की व्यवस्था"** (टी/सी–24-080, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 7.85 लाख), **"सूल्लूरुपेट एसडीएससी शार में एसडीएमएच की संविरचन मरम्मतें"** (टी/सी–24-081, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 7.49 लाख), **"वर्ष 2025-26 तथा 2026-27 के लिए शार एवं सूल्लूरुपेट के आवासीय कॉलोनियों और एसडीएससी शार के अंदर के अन्य सुविधाओं में जल एवं मल नमूनों की आवधिक परीक्षण"** (टी/सी–24-082, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 7.89 लाख) हेतु मद दर ई–निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा दस्तावेजों को **07.04.2025** को **14:30** बजे तक डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। इच्छुक निविदाकार विस्तृत सूचना के लिए हमारी वेबसाइट **www.isro.gov.in** या **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO** देखें।

On behalf of President of India, Item Rate tenders are invited through e-tendering; **"AMC for Civil & PH Works, Operation & maintenance of water supply & sewage disposal units at PHC-II area for the year 2025-26 (One year)"** (T/C-24-077, Est. cost ₹ 112.30 Lakhs); **"Replacement of damaged Joinery items in 136 nos of Type- IV, VII, VIII quarters in PHC-I & II area, SDSC SHAR"** (T/C-24-078, Est. cost ₹ 52.78 Lakhs); **"Civil repair works for readiness of vacant quarters (100 no.s) at SMN, PNN and PCN Colony, Sullurpeta"** (T/C-24-079, Est. cost ₹ 45.76 Lakhs); **"Providing barbed wire fencing, Partitioning with Galvalume sheet, MS gate, Approach Road formation with debris etc., for the dumping yard, QCH, SDSC SHAR"** (T/C-24-080, Est. cost ₹ 7.85 Lakhs): **"Structural Repairs to SDMH at Sullurupeta, SDSC SHAR"** (T/C-24-081, Est. cost ₹ 7.49 Lakhs): **Periodical testing of water and sewage samples in SHAR, Sullurupeta Housing colonies and other inside facilities at SDSC SHAR for the years 2025-26 & 2026-27".** (T/C-24-082, Est. cost ₹ 7.89 Lakhs). Tender documents can be downloaded up to **07.04.2025**, **14:30** hrs. Interested tenderers may visit **www.isro.gov.in** or **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO** for details.

हस्ताक्षरित- समूह प्रधान, सीएमजी / एसडीएससी शार / Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG / SDSC SHAR

THE HINDU CARE COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

This is a 16.66 cm warning. That is how much the Thwaites Glacier melted in four months.

Source: Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK)

THE HINDU GROUP

Let that sink in.

16.66 cm may seem insignificant. But when this doomsday glacier entirely collapses by 2100 it could cause a 10ft rise in sea levels and drown nations.

Conserving water reduces energy use and carbon emissions. Turn off the tap while scrubbing dishes, cut your shower time short, or swap that hose for a bucket.

Because every drop saved slows the melt down.

THE HINDU

WORLD WATER DAY

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Telephone No. 0135 - 2762444, Fax No. 0135 - 2763839

Website: (www.mstcecommerce.com)

CORRIGENDUM FOR PURCHASE OF POWER UNDER LONG TERM PROCUREMENT AGAINST TENDER SPECIFICATION No. 21/CE(COMM)/UPCL-21/LTPP/2025

The amended tender process and activities timeline modifications against tender specification No. 21/CE(COMM)/UPCL-21/LTPP/2025 are as under:-

S.No.	Event	Date & Time
1.	Utility response to queries latest by	07-04-2025 up to 17:00 Hrs
2.	Application due date	22-04-2025 up to 17:00 Hrs
3.	Announcement of Pre-qualified Applications	13-05-2025 up to 17:00 Hrs
4.	Letter of Award (LOA)	Within 30 days of Bid due date
5.	Validity of Bids	120 days from Bid Due Date
6.	Signing of PSA-DBFOO	Within 30 days of issue of LOA

Hard Copy of B.G/ proof of EMD should reach in the office of SE(Commercial), UPCL on or before the due date of application.

All other terms and conditions shall remain as per tender specification No. 21/CE(COMM)/UPCL-21/LTPP/2025.

No.: 140/EE/(CM)/UPCL/A-2 Dt. 22.03.2025 **SE (COMMERCIAL)**

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INBRIEF

Farmers' body seeks policy solution for duty on onions

After Centre scrapped 20% export duty on onion effective from April 1, the Maharashtra government on Sunday welcomed the move, but the Kisan Sabha said it was too late and sought a policy solution. The Kisan called it "unfortunate" as export restrictions had impacted onion producers adversely. "We welcome the move if this will bring comfort to our onion farmers; however, it can't recover the losses the farmers have faced," a member of the Sabha said. Against this backdrop, the Sabha has urged the government to avoid irregular export bans and export restrictions, not to increase export duty and instead take steps to formulate long-term export policy for onion producers at the international level.

Operation on to flush out militants from Kathua forests

A major anti-militancy operation was launched on Sunday evening after a group of militants were engaged in a gunfight in a forest area of Jammu's Kathua district. Preliminary reports suggested the security forces had received a tip-off about the movement of militants at Sanyal village, close to the India-Pakistan border in the Hiranagar sector of Kathua district. "During the combing operation of the security forces, a group of militants was spotted in a jungle area. The militants took cover of the undulating topography and dense green cover inside the forests," an official said. Reinforcements were rushed to throw a multi-tier cordon around the area where militants opened fire on the security forces. There were reports of attempts to take civilians as hostages.

'TB champions' join battle against the disease in Meghalaya

State govt. has roped them in to spread awareness of the free testing, treatment, and support programmes, says National Health Mission official

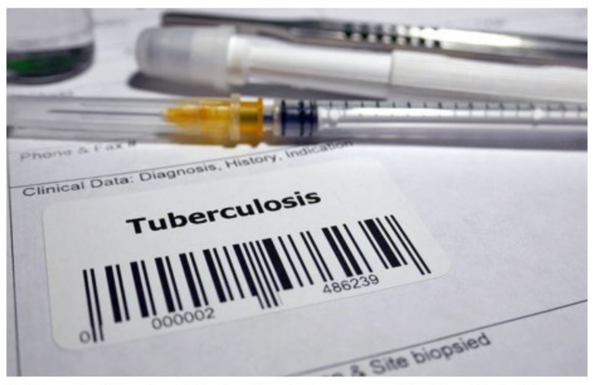
Bindu Shajan Perappadan
SHILLONG

The Meghalaya government is innovatively pushing for a tuberculosis-free State by reskilling TB survivors and bringing them into TB-control programmes as "TB champions", advocating for early detection and treatment adherence among patients.

TB remains a significant public health challenge worldwide, with India bearing the highest disease burden in the world. In 2023, India had an estimated 26% of the global TB burden.

Meghalaya has been battling challenges, including a hilly terrain, poor road connectivity, the presence of many hamlets in hard-to-reach valleys and mountains, which leads to delay in patients seeking timely health interventions.

"The scheme is aimed at ensuring that no patient is left behind. The TB champions spread awareness about TB, advising people to test if they see symptoms, tell them about the free testing, treatment and support programmes, and encourage them to go beyond on the Union government's 100-day campaign, which began in December last year," Ramkumar S., Secretary and Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM), Shillong, said.



TB is a significant public health challenge worldwide with India bearing the highest TB disease burden in the world. GETTY IMAGES

Speaking to *The Hindu* about her involvement with the State's TB programme, first as a patient and now as a TB champion, Ridalin Shullai, from East Khasi Hill district, said she wanted to become the "voice of the voiceless, who often don't seek treatment because of the fear associated with TB".

"Even with modern testing, treatment, and the support given by the State government, there is a lot of stigma, myths and fears associated with TB. This isn't a simple disease. It has a profound and long-lasting adverse impact on the financial and emotional well-being of the family, if not treated in a holistic manner," Ms. Shullai said.

'Testing is a must'

"I am here to make a difference," another TB champion Request Star Keubah said. "One day, I coughed blood, which was dismissed as food poisoning. Later, doctors found it was TB. I now motivate youngsters and those in far-flung villages to always test for TB, even if they have only mild symptoms. My aim is to ensure that testing should be 100%. Aggressive testing is a must to free the State of TB," he said.

Violinist R.K. Shriramkumar chosen for Sangita Kalanidhi award of the Music Academy

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

R.K. Shriramkumar is an authority on Dikshitar's composition. He has played with stalwarts of Carnatic music. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

Violinist R.K. Shriramkumar has been selected for the Sangita Kalanidhi award of the Music Academy for 2025.

He has accompanied stalwarts of yesteryear, including Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, M.S. Subbulakshmi, D.K. Pattammal, D.K. Jayaraman, T. Brinda and T. Mukta, M. Balamuralikrishna, and K.V. Narayanaswamy and present-day musicians such as Sudha Ragunathan, Vijay Siva, Bombay Jayashri, Sowmya, and T.M. Krishna.

In a press release, N. Murali, President, Music Academy, said the executive committee on Sunday decided to confer the award on Mr. Shriramkumar.

"In the past few decades, he has been acknowledged as an authority on the Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsani of Subbarama Dikshitar, which remains one of the best-known compilations of Muthuswami Dikshitar's compositions. It is fitting that he has been chosen for this prestigious award in the year marking the 250th anniversary of the master composer," Mr. Murali said.

Mr. Shriramkumar belongs to the Rudrapatnam family of musicians. The 'R' in his name stands for Rudrapattinam, a village on the banks of the Cauvery in Karnataka. The grandson of violinist R.K. Venkatarama Shastry, who conducted the Tyagaraja Aradhana at Thiruvaiyaru for almost 40 years since the 1950s, he had his initial lessons in the violin from Savitri Satyamurthy. He was also trained in violin and vocal music by Venkatarama Shastry. He later received guidance in violin from V.V. Subrahmanyam and in vocal music from Sangita Kalanidhi Shri D.K. Jayaraman.

Sangita Kalanidhi R.K. Srikantan is his granduncle and vocalists R.N. Thyagarajan and R.N. Tharanathan, the Rudrapatnam Brothers, are his uncles.

'Blessings of gurus'

"It is God's grace and blessings of my gurus," Mr. Shriramkumar said, expressing happiness on being selected for the coveted award in the Carnatic music world. The Sangita Kalanidhi nominee will preside over the academic sessions of the 99th annual conference and concerts of the Music Academy to be held between December 15, 2025 and January 1, 2026.

Mr. Murali said dancer Urmila Satyanarayana had been selected for the Nritya Kalanidhi award. The Sangita Kala Acharya awards will be presented to vocalist Shymala Venkateswaran and thavil maestro T.R. Govindarajan. The TTK awards will go to Kathakali artiste Madambi Subramania Namboothiri and veena players J.T. Jeyaraaj Krishnan and Jayasri Jeyaraaj Krishnan.

The Sangita Kala Acharya awards and the TTK awards will be presented with the Sangita Kalanidhi award on January 1, 2026.

Ms. Urmila will receive the award at the inauguration of the Music Academy's 19th annual dance festival on January 3.

Human creativity will retain potential despite AI disruption, says Vempati

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

The increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI), especially in the media space, will remain in the long term human-led rather than machine-led despite apprehensions that automation may take over, according to Shashi Shekhar Vempati, co-founder of A4India.org and Chairperson of the Apex Advisory Committee at the Department of Science and Technology.

Speaking to *The Hindu* on a range of issues, Mr. Vempati said there were several "sticky" issues with regard to AI in the media space. "The first is, of course, of creative copyright. There are several cases in the courts questioning the manner in which models have been trained, and how they are likely [to] impact the rights of creators, especially if AI can generate creative content that is indistinguishable from the works of the humans. We may see regulatory guardrails on this front," he said.

"The second and more sticky issue is, ultimately, the essence of creativity is human. A fact that even Prime Minister Narendra Modi alluded to in his conversation with podcaster Lex Fridman. I believe that sticky creative content that will be trusted and consumed as a matter of habit requires the human touch. It cannot be fully automated," he said.

"The advent of AI is of course going to change the workplace and nature of jobs, especially in IT companies, but not in the way many feel," he added. "Despite the high levels of automation, many functions, including software code generation, will require a degree of human oversight," he added.

He said that as far as Indian IT industry was concerned, the biggest impact of automation would be felt in low-level tasks, including testing, quality assurance, and so on, and with software code generation using AI becoming better, even software development would, to a large extent, get automated.

"It is also believed by some that with AI lowering the cost of software development and giving greater flexibility to enterprises to evolve their software systems to suit their needs, we may see the clock turning back towards more in-house custom applications rather than off-the-shelf products," Mr. Vempati said. "Another area of opportunity for Indian IT would be around annotating and enriching large datasets to make them AI usable. As AI use cases become more and more specialised, requiring deep domain knowledge, these value-added data services will be the natural evolution for Indian IT, building on earlier cycles of ITO (IT outsourcing), BPO (business process outsourcing) and KPO (knowledge process outsourcing)," he said.

Shashi Shekhar Vempati says the biggest impact of automation in the Indian IT industry will be felt in low level tasks. FILE PHOTO

In terms of what had been the focus in India with reference to AI, Mr. Vempati said it was guided by "our societal concerns".

India's primary focus

"India's primary AI focus has been on overcoming the language barrier, and rightly so. The *Mann ki Baat* corpus, which is a highly reliable and accurate corpus of text and audio in multiple Indian languages and dialects, was the basis for many of the early efforts focused on Indian models for AI. Bhashini by the MeitY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology), which PM Modi has used for his speeches during the 2024 elections, stands out, and Anuvadini by the AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) is being used to translate textbooks across schools and universities using AI. AI4Bharat at IIT-Madras has released a wide range of models and datasets based on Indian languages, encompassing text and voice. Sarvam AI, incubated out of IIT-Madras, has been roped in by the UIDAI (Unique Identification Authority of India) for a range of use cases. mVaak out of IIT-Kanpur has built an audio/voice model leveraging DD (Doordarshan), AIR (All India Radio) archives for a range of use cases," Mr. Vempati said.

There are, he added, several start-ups focused on other kinds of AI models, including Paralaxiom in Bengaluru, working on a vision AI model for public spaces in the Indian context; Pienomial in Pune, which has a knowledge model for the life sciences industry aiding highly reliable research; and Innoplexus, also out of Pune, that has amassed an array of patents in AI-led drug discovery, among others.

'Data Daan'

In terms of challenges for Indian AI start-ups, Mr. Vempati said that apart from funding and access to computing power, there are challenges for access to public datasets in the Indian context. "We at AI4India.Org have done our bit to motivate Indian organisations, institutions, corporates and public bodies to pledge to make their datasets accessible to AI model developers and researchers through what we are calling 'Data Daan' (https://datadaan.org), as an ethical voluntary movement to share data, in stark contrast to the manner in which LLMs (large language models) have been trained violating copyrights," Mr. Vempati said.

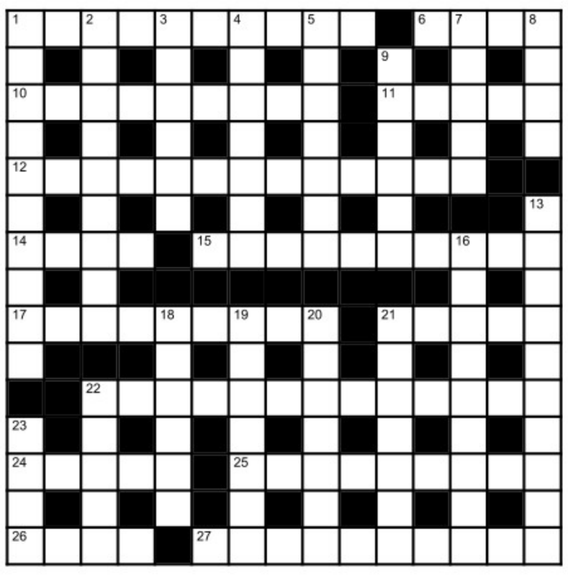
"Ultimately, it's more important for India to create conditions for the diffusion of AI across all layers of the economy and society, so we are able to reap tangible benefits in healthcare, education, and governance by replicating the success of other DPGs (digital public goods) such as UPI (Unified Payments Interface), etc.," Mr. Vempati said.

TH CROSSWORD + 14440

(set by Afterdark)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Designed culottes in college at England for Romaine (3,7)
6 Crowd seen in Christmas service (4)
10 A priest is out of favour during trial period (9)
11 A win once more (5)
12 Arranged mass meet, hence red liqueur (5,2,6)
14 Those people's article ending in tragedy (4)
15 Say, China's eaters in a mess are at fault (3,7)
17 Cassettes played in legal actions as a precedent (4,5)
21 Career or Carrier (5)
22 Say, aggressive sales vets rife surprisingly (4-9)
24 A space ultimately made wide open (5)
25 Increase support at one entrance (9)
26 Trade some soda and liquor (4)
27 People with time follow Insta luminaries primarily for payment (10)

Down

1 Enable or restrict account accessing a tape, remove page on time (10)
2 Sleek moss when burnt has no fumes (9)
3 Polish setter found in back alley (6)
4 Boat's timer malfunctions, royal engineers inducted (7)
5 Cheats smuggle iron statues primarily to own (7)
7 Watchful in a funeral (5)
8 Yodelled one in Singapore (4)
9 Jog in American terminals (6)
13 Conclusion to pay people on time (10)
16 Dead inmate in a compound (9)
18 Visitor was more quiet when man left and lady entered (6)
19 File's quiet on writer circumventing a rule (7)
20 Mark ousts us in a terrible way (4,3)
21 Restrict dogs (7)
22 A sluggish person has taken small digital protection (5)
23 Girl has style but no brain (4)

SUDOKU

		1	3					4
	3		8		5			9
			6				5	
							6	
7		2	5		4	8		1
	9							
	5				1			
2			7		8		9	
4					3	7		

No.SS6468 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

	R		C				S				S		P	
C	A	N	A	D	A			C	O	N	S	U	L	A	R
	J		C		M		U		O		B		S	
E	A	S	T	G	E	R	M	A	N		P	O	S	H
			U		R				S		O		M	
S	W	A	S	T	I	K	A		E	Y	E	C	U	P
	E				C		T		N		N		S	
	S	H	O	P	A	S	S	I	S	T	A	N	T	
	T		P		N		E		E				E	
L	I	M	P	I	D			A	D	V	I	S	O	R	Y
	N		O		R				E		U			
O	D	D	S			E	A	R	T	R	U	M	P	E	T
	I		I		A		A		S		M		P	
M	A	N	T	O	M	A	N		E	L	I	X	I	R
	N		E				K				T		C	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

9	7	1	5	2	6	4	3	8
2	8	3	4	7	9	6	1	5
4	6	5	1	8	3	9	2	7
8	9	2	7	4	5	3	6	1
5	1	7	3	6	2	8	9	4
6	3	4	9	1	8	5	7	2
7	4	9	8	3	1	2	5	6
3	2	8	6	5	7	1	4	9
1	5	6	2	9	4	7	8	3

FAITH

As fate would have it

Human life is punctuated by joy and sorrow. It is human nature to get ecstatic when good things happen but to blame fate when things go badly. Whatever is meant to happen will happen, but with the grace of God or Guru, there is a chance of changing one's fate, said P. Swaminathan. It is commonly held that animals and creatures do not have the sense to know right or wrong but our scriptural lore is replete with instances where animals have prayed to god, shown exemplary devotion and exhibited faith. The moral here is that one should have faith and look for an opportunity to overcome the struggles. Neeti Satakam is one work that underscores this point succinctly. There was a snake charmer who made a living by exhibiting his snake in the town and village centres, making it dance to his tune. Residents were quick to part with some money. The snake charmer could live comfortably; however, conscious of the fact that his livelihood depended upon the snake, he kept it half hungry all the time, thereby ensuring its obedience.

The snake rued its fate and hankered after a hearty meal and was alert for suitable chances. It so happened that one night, when the snake charmer was sleeping in a forest, a hungry rodent came upon him and sniffing the basket and scenting a meal, began to make a hole in it. When the rodent made a hole large enough for it to enter, the snake swallowed it and quickly escaped from the basket. Not for nothing is said that fate has a double sway. Whatever happens is ordained by fate and the best way to face up to adversities is to show equipoise. True peace lies in placing one's trust in the higher power.

Travel on co-branded credit cards

TRAVELBYTES

Rohit Chhibbar

A post-COVID surge along with rising aspiration to travel have fuelled the growing demand for travel-centric credit cards offering benefits like accelerated rewards/air miles and discounted flights among others. While most benefits are bundled into premium credit cards, stringent eligibility criteria and high annual fee makes them less accessible to a sizeable part of the population. As a result, many travellers turn to co-branded travel credit cards.

Credit cards co-branded with airlines or hotels offer value-back in the form of air miles or loyalty points that can be used at the brand's portal for direct travel bookings.

Most airline/hotel co-branded cards offer complimentary membership to the associated brand's loyalty programme.

Apart from airline/hotel co-branded cards, some travel cards are co-branded with popular travel portals like MakeMyTrip, EaseMyTrip, Ixigo and Yatra, and offer discount on flights and hotel bookings made through their respective platforms.

However, co-branded travel credit cards come with their own set of drawbacks. Since rewards are offered in partner miles/loyalty points, redemption options are restricted. Some of these cards may also lack broader travel benefits around lounge access, forex mark-up fee, etc. Travellers, confused whether a co-branded travel card would be the right fit for them, should keep the following things in mind:

Compare core value

The key factor in choosing a travel credit card is rewards programme. When comparing an airline co-branded card to an airline-agnostic travel card, it is essential to evaluate the total value you get for spending.

For example, On KrisFlyer SBI Card, yearly spends of ₹10 Lakh earn 25,000 KrisFlyer Miles, enough for 1 economy-class ticket from Delhi to Singapore on Singapore Airlines. However, the same spend earns 50,000 EDGE Miles on Axis Atlas, transferable in 1:2 ratio to KrisFlyer Miles, resulting in 1 lakh miles —enough for four economy tickets on the same route.

Hence, airline agnostic travel cards like Axis Atlas or Axis Horizon could offer greater overall value. However, they might come at higher annual fee and more stringent conditions.

Additional travel benefits

Many co-branded travel cards extend more benefits like complimentary lounge access, significantly enhancing their utility for frequent travellers. It is important to check these benefits and see how they fit in your travel routine.

Most travel cards also offer bonus rewards, vouchers or other benefits on reaching spending milestones.

Right brand partnership

Consumers who are loyal to a particular airline or hotel can consider getting a card co-branded with preferred airline/hotel. While such cards would offer higher value-back on the associated brands, the redemption would be limited to their own ecosystem.

Travellers who do not want to limit the benefits to an airline or hotel can consider cards co-branded with popular travel portals such as Standard Chartered EaseMyTrip Credit Card, Ixigo AU Credit Card and MakeMyTrip ICICI Credit Card.

In conclusion, co-branded travel credit cards can be a good option for brand-loyal travellers who frequently book with a particular airline, hotel chain or travel platform. However, those looking for a single credit card to cover all travel needs may need to choose cards that offer benefits with preferred brands without sacrificing broader benefits. Redemption flexibility, spending limits and overall value proposition are the key things to consider when choosing a card.

(The writer is chief business officer, credit cards, Paisabazaar)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

ILLUSTRATION: SAAI

Explained: home insurance vs. home-loan insurance

Though it is not mandatory to buy either home insurance or home-loan insurance, they are beneficial to the customers, if claims are made as per terms of the policy coverage

HOUSED IN SAFETY

Vaishali R Venkat

Should you buy home insurance or home-loan insurance is a million-dollar question. People often use the terms interchangeably, though they are not supposed to be used that way. Fundamentally they are apples and oranges.

> Home insurance protects you from losses arising out of damages caused to the structure of your house and its contents.

> Home-loan insurance protects a person (or family) from liabilities of home loan or equated monthly instalment (EMI) payments

Home insurance protects you from losses arising out of damages caused to the structure of your house and its contents. In contrast, a home-loan insurance protects a person (or his family) from the liabilities of the home loan or the equated monthly instalment (EMI) payments. Let's dive into the details.

Home insurance

On April 1, 2021, IRDAI made it mandatory for all general insurers to offer standard home insurance policy called 'Bharat Griha Raksha'. For instance, if someone's house and the contents thereof are damaged owing to fire accident, flood, earthquake, volcano or other accidents or natural calamities, home insurance acts as a lifesaver.

Under the policy, three types of coverage - for building structure, things at home and optional cover - are offered. One can include the optional cover in his/her policy by paying an additional premium. The optional cover is available for valuables such as jewellery, silverware, paintings, etc. based on agreed value. Further, this also includes personal accident cover if the damage to the building also resulted in the death of the insurance policy holder or his/her spouse.

Mohammad Monish, senior associate, home insurance, PolicyBazaar, (PW24995), says, "Most insurers offer coverage in the standard policy for cost of repairs, architect or surveyor's fees, costs of clearing debris, loss of rent, rent for alternative accommodation or cost of construction. However, some insurers may charge additional premium by offering few additional benefits via add-ons, making the policy costly. Therefore, buyers must carefully study the inclusions of standard policy, inclusions through the add-ons, premium amount payable, etc."

Home-loan insurance

A home-loan insurance prevents you from losing the ownership title of your house if you failed to pay EMIs to loan-providers (banks) on time. That is, when a borrower of a home loan defaulted on EMIs owing to death or other adversity, home-loan insurance comes in handy.

For instance, let's assume Mr. X had availed a loan from ABYZ bank and he must pay EMIs for 30 years. During the tenure of the loan, if Mr. X met with an accident and died, the balance loan amount due to ABYZ bank would be paid by the insurer. This way, Mr. X's family members would be relieved from the burden of continuing to pay the EMIs. Of course, home-loan insurance coverage varies from one insurance company to the other. Some provide coverage only on the demise of the insured person, while some offer protection even when the person has critical illness, met with accident or lost job, thereby losing the earning potential. However, terms and conditions are not same across insurers.

Who can buy?

Any individual can purchase a home insurance policy provided he owns a property in his name; that is, only if he is a landlord of any property. A tenant cannot buy a home insurance covering the structure of a building, for, he has no insurable interest, as per insurance parlance. However, he could avail a policy covering contents/valuables stored in the house.

Home-loan insurance cannot be purchased if you do not have any existing home loan. For, the very policy is designed to offer protection only for the outstanding loan amount at the time of adversity.

Premium payable

Often, the premium payable for home-loan insurance would be much higher than that payable for the standard home insurance.

Home-loan insurance could help you in reducing the down payment needed at the time of availing the home loan, as the insurer 'guarantees' repayment of the loan at the time of any untoward/adverse event. However, the standard home insurance has zero impact on down payment.

Are they mandatory?

Mr. Monish says, "Both Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India and Reserve Bank of India have not made it mandatory to buy home insurance or home-loan insurance. Customers can choose to buy or not to buy but both are beneficial to them if claims are made as per the policy coverage."

(The writer is an NISM & CRISIL-certified wealth manager)

Why retirees prefer FDs

THINKINVESTOR

Retirees adopt a simple rule to moderate (if not overcome) their fear: conserve capital and consume income. Any investment that fit this rule is naturally embraced. Bank fixed deposits do.

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

Most adult children have an issue with parents' investing in bank fixed deposits (FDs). The argument is bank deposits earn low post-tax returns and do not beat inflation. This is true. Yet, it may be optimal for retirees to invest in bank deposits. Now, we look at the behavioural reasons why deposits are staple investments for retirees.

Stability and satisfaction

More money is certainly better than some, whether it buys more happiness or not. But the source of money is important, especially for retirees. Most may be uncomfortable if generating more returns requires taking higher investment risk. The argument is based on a behavioural bias called loss aversion. Typically, losses hurt us more than gains can give us happiness of the same magnitude. That is, ₹10,000 loss is likely to be more painful than the happiness a ₹10,000 of gain can give. Empirical research shows working executives are likely to invest only when risking ₹10,000 can offer a potential gain of at least₹20,000. That is, they want a reward to risk ratio of at least 2:1. Retirees require an even higher ratio, nearly 4:1. Why?

Retirees typically depend on their passive income to meet post retirement living expenses. Therefore, an investment portfolio that not only has a high return potential but also high downside risk is not preferred. What if a significant part of portfolio value is lost due to market crash? What if they sell equity investments every year, and then run out of money in old age? Most retirees, therefore, prefer stable income portfolios. The satisfaction of receiving stable income is more dominating than having to worry about fluctuations on equity investments – earning higher returns but with high downside risk.

Conclusion

Investing is about risk and return. But behavioural biases can dominate the structure of an investment portfolio. It is true post-tax returns on bank FDs are unlikely to beat inflation. But more important is the retirees' fear of running out of money in old age. This can happen for two reasons. One, investments decline in value on negative returns. And two, the retirees outlive life expectancy, referred to as the longevity risk. Retirees, therefore, adopt a simple rule to moderate (if not overcome) their fear: conserve capital and consume income. Any investment that fit this rule is naturally embraced. Bank fixed deposits do.

(The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%) Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
Small Finance Banks				
AU Small Finance Bank	8.00	7.25	7.50	7.25
Equitas Small Finance Bank	8.25	8.10	8.00	7.25
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.38	6.00	6.75	6.25
Jana Small Finance Bank	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.20
NorthEast Small Finance Bank	9.00	7.00	9.00	8.00
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	8.60	8.25	8.25	8.60
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	8.25	8.10	7.20	7.20
Unity Small Finance Bank	8.60	7.25	8.15	8.15
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.00	8.50	7.75
Private Sector Banks				
Axis Bank	7.25	6.70	7.10	7.00
Bandhan Bank	8.05	8.05	7.25	5.85
City Union Bank	7.50	7.00	6.50	6.25
CSB Bank	8.00	5.00	5.75	5.75
DBS Bank	7.50	7.00	6.50	6.50
DCB Bank	8.00	7.10	7.50	7.40
Federal Bank	7.50	7.00	7.10	7.10
HDFC Bank	7.40	6.60	7.00	7.00
ICICI Bank	7.25	6.70	7.00	7.00
IDFC FIRST Bank	7.90	6.50	6.80	6.75
IndusInd Bank	7.75	7.75	7.25	7.25
Jammu & Kashmir Bank	7.30	7.00	6.75	6.50
Karur Vysya Bank	7.60	7.00	7.00	7.00
Karnataka Bank	7.50	7.25	6.50	6.50
Kotak Mahindra Bank	7.40	7.10	7.00	6.20
RBL Bank	8.00	7.50	7.50	7.10
SBM Bank India	8.25	7.05	7.30	7.75
South Indian Bank	7.40	6.80	6.70	6.00
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	7.60	7.00	6.50	6.50
YES Bank	8.00	7.75	7.25	7.25
Public Sector Banks				
Bank of Baroda	7.30	6.85	7.15	6.80
Bank of India	7.30	6.80	6.50	6.00
Bank of Maharashtra	7.45	6.75	6.50	6.50
Canara Bank	7.40	6.85	7.40	6.70
Central Bank of India	7.50	6.85	7.00	6.75
Indian Bank	7.30	6.10	6.25	6.25
Indian Overseas Bank	7.30	7.10	6.50	6.50
Punjab National Bank	7.25	6.80	7.00	6.50
Punjab & Sind Bank	7.45	6.30	6.00	6.50
State Bank of India	7.25	6.80	6.75	6.50
Union Bank of India	7.30	6.80	6.70	6.50

Home Loan Interest Rates

(In %)

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.) Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
Public Sector Banks			
State Bank of India	8.25-9.40	8.25-9.40	8.25-9.40
Bank of Baroda	8.15-10.40	8.15-10.40	8.15-10.65
Punjab National Bank	8.20-10.00	8.15-9.90	8.15-9.90
Bank of India	8.15-10.60	8.15-10.60	8.15-10.85
UCO Bank*	8.30 #	8.30 #	8.30 #
Bank of Maharashtra	8.10-10.90	8.10-10.90	8.10-10.90
Punjab and Sind Bank	8.35-9.85	8.35-9.85	8.35-9.85
Indian Overseas Bank	8.15-10.75	8.15-10.75	8.15-10.75
Indian Bank	8.15-9.55	8.15-9.55	8.15-9.55
Private Sector Banks			
Kotak Mahindra Bank	8.65 #	8.65 #	8.65 #
ICICI Bank	8.75 #	8.75 #	8.75 #
Axis Bank	8.75-12.80	8.75-12.80	8.75-9.65
HSBC Bank	8.40 #	8.40 #	8.40 #
South Indian Bank	8.50 #	8.50 #	8.50 #
Karur Vysya Bank	8.75-11.70	8.75-11.70	8.75-11.70
Karnataka Bank	8.94-11.06	8.94-11.06	8.94-9.59
Federal Bank	8.80 #	8.80 #	8.80 #
Dhanlaxmi Bank	8.75 #	8.75 #	8.75 #
TMB	8.60-9.80	8.60-9.80	8.60-9.80
Bandhan Bank	8.91-15.00	8.91-13.08	8.91-13.08
RBL Bank	9.00 #	9.00 #	9.00 #
CSB Bank	10.24-12.09	10.24-12.09	10.24-12.09
HDFC Bank Ltd.	8.70 #	8.70 #	8.70 #
City Union Bank	10.35-15.75	10.15-15.75	10.15-14.05
Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)			
LIC Housing Finance	8.25 #	8.25 #	8.25 #
Bajaj Housing Finance	8.25 #	8.25 #	8.25 #
Tata Capital	8.75 #	8.75 #	8.75 #
PNB Housing Finance	8.50-14.50	8.50-14.50	8.50-11.45
GIC Housing Finance	8.80 #	8.80 #	8.80 #
SMFG India Home Finance	10.00 #	10.00 #	10.00 #
Sammaan Capital	8.75 #	8.75 #	8.75 #
Aditya Birla Capital	8.60 #	8.60 #	8.60 #
ICICI Home Finance	9.30 #	9.30 #	9.30 #
Godrej Housing Finance	8.55 #	8.55 #	8.55 #

*Additional concession of 0.10% for takeover loans
#Onwards Rates as on March 19 Source:Paisabazaar.com

RAMALLAH

Palestinians slam Israel's nod for new West Bank settlements

REUTERS

The Palestinian Foreign Ministry condemned an Israeli decision to recognise more than a dozen new settlements in the occupied West Bank, upgrading existing neighbourhoods to independent status. The 13 neighbourhoods approved for development by the Israeli Cabinet are located across the West Bank. AFP

KABUL

U.S. lifts bounties on three senior Taliban officials including Haqqani

AP

The U.S. lifted bounties on three senior Taliban figures, including Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani who heads a powerful network blamed for bloody attacks against Afghanistan's former Western-backed government, Kabul said . His name no longer appears on the State Department's Rewards for Justice website. AP

DHAKA

Bangladesh Army rejects student party's claims of interference

AP

The Bangladesh Army on Sunday rejected allegations made by the student-led National Citizen Party that the military was hatching a plan to rehabilitate deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League. The NCP had staged protest rallies at the premier Dhaka University campus on Saturday. PTI

ROME

Pope leaves hospital 5 weeks after being admitted for pneumonia

AFP

Pope Francis greeted the faithful from Rome's Gemelli hospital on Sunday, the first time the 88-year-old has been seen in public since February 14. The head of the world's 1.4 billion Catholics, who spent over five weeks in hospital battling pneumonia, was on the balcony for two minutes after which he was discharged immediately. AFP

As death toll crosses 50,000, Israel orders evacuation of southern Gaza

Strikes across the southern Gaza Strip kill at least 26 people, including a Hamas political leader and several women and children; Israel's Cabinet approves plan to set up a new body tasked with advancing 'voluntary departure' of Palestinians

Associated Press
DEIR AL-BALAH

More than 50,000 Palestinians have now been killed in the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, the territory's Health Ministry said Sunday, as new Israeli airstrikes killed at least 26 Palestinians overnight, including a Hamas political leader and several women and children.

Israel's military also sent ground troops into part of the southern city of Rafah as thousands of Palestinians fled after new evacuation orders.

Stunted future: Palestinian children inspect the rubble at the site of an Israeli strike in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza. AFP

Late on Saturday, Israel's Cabinet approved a proposal to set up a new directorate tasked with advancing the "voluntary departure" of Palestinians in line with U.S. President Donald Trump's proposal to depopulate Gaza and rebuild it for others.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said the new body would be "subject to Israeli and international law" and coordinate "passage by land, sea and air to the destination countries."

The military ordered people to leave Rafah's already heavily destroyed Tel al-Sultan neighborhood on foot along a single route to Muwasi, a sprawling area of squalid tent camps. It later announced that troops had encircled Tel al-Sultan in order to eliminate Hamas fighters and militant infrastructure.

Hamas said that Salah Bardawil, a member of its political bureau and the Palestinian parliament, was killed in a strike in Muwasi that also killed his wife. Bardawil was a well-known member of the group's political wing who gave media interviews over the years.

Mounting figures

Gaza's Health Ministry said a total of 50,021 Palestinians have been killed in the war and more than 1,13,000 have been wounded. The latest toll announced on Sunday includes 673 people killed since Israel's surprise bombardment on Tuesday as well as 233 bodies that were recently identified, the ministry said.

Turkish court formalises the arrest of Erdogan rival

Associated Press
ISTANBUL

A court formally arrested the Mayor of Istanbul, a key rival to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, on Sunday and ordered him jailed pending the outcome of a trial on corruption charges.

Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu was detained following a raid on his residence earlier this week, sparking the largest wave of street demonstrations in Turkiye in more than a decade.

His imprisonment is widely regarded as a political move to remove a major contender from the next presidential race, currently scheduled for 2028.

The prosecutor's office said the court decided to jail Mr. Imamoglu on suspicion of running a criminal organisation, accepting bribes, extortion, illegally recording personal data and bid-rigging. A request for him to be imprisoned on terror-related charges was rejected although he still faces prosecution.

Ekrem Imamoglu

The Interior Ministry later announced that Imamoglu had been suspended from duty as a "temporary measure."

Alongside Mr. Imamoglu, 47 others were also jailed pending trial, including a key aide and two district Mayors from Istanbul.

Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said Sunday that 323 people were detained the previous evening over disturbances at protests.

The formal arrest came as more than 1.5 million members of the opposition Republican People's Party, or CHP, began holding a primary presidential election to endorse Imamoglu, the sole candidate.

The party has also set up symbolic ballot boxes nationwide to allow people who are not party members to express their support for the mayor. Large crowds gathered to cast a "solidarity ballot."

Certain things need to change to enable talks with U.S.: Iran

Reuters
DUBAI

Talks with the U.S. are no longer possible unless certain things change, Iranian state media reported Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi as saying on Sunday as Washington awaits a response to its invitation for talks on a new nuclear deal.

On Sunday, Mr. Araqchi said that Iran was not opposed to talks out of "stubbornness", but rather as a result of history and experience.

He added that Washington needs to recalibrate its policy before Tehran takes part in talks.

In his first term, Mr. Trump withdrew the United States from a 2015 deal between Iran and major powers that had placed strict limits on Tehran's nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief.

Old pact invalid

"In my opinion, the 2015 pact in its current form cannot be revived. It would not be in our interest because our nuclear situation has advanced significantly and we can no longer return to previous conditions," Mr. Araqchi said.

As Russia-Ukraine talks begin today, Trump envoy says Putin 'wants peace'

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump's envoy said on Sunday he expects progress in Ukraine-Russia talks on Monday and that he trusts Russian leader Vladimir Putin does not want to expand his invasion of the pro-Western country.

"I think you are going to see in Saudi Arabia some real progress, particularly as it affects a Black Sea ceasefire on ships between both countries. And from that, you will naturally gravitate to a full-on shooting ceasefire," Steve Witkoff told *Fox News*.

Collateral damage: A wall clock with a picture of residents is seen at the site of a a Russian drone strike in Zaporizhzhia. REUTERS

"I feel he wants peace," Mr. Witkoff said of Mr. Putin, whose forces have been occupying swaths of Ukraine since 2014 and launched a full-scale invasion in 2022. "Lots of progress got made last week."

The U.S. has made a stunning about-face on Russia since Mr. Trump took power.

"There are grievances on both sides but our job ... is to narrow the issues, bring the parties together and stop the killing," he said.

Asked about whether he thinks Russia would seek to occupy more of Ukraine or even go beyond into other parts of Europe, Mr. Witkoff said that was "academic." "I just don't see that he wants to take all of Europe," Mr. Witkoff said.

Meanwhile, at least seven persons were killed after Russia launched a barrage of drones across Ukraine overnight on Sunday.

Canada PM calls snap polls, seeks mandate to tackle Trump

Reuters
OTTAWA

New Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on Sunday called a snap election for April 28, 2025, saying he needed a strong mandate to deal with the threat posed by U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs.

Although the next election was not due until October, Mr. Carney is hoping to capitalise on a remarkable recovery by his Liberal party since January, when Mr. Trump began threatening Canada and former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau quit.

Mark Carney

Mr. Carney, a former central banker with no previous political experience, captured the Liberal leadership two weeks ago by persuading party members he was the best person to tackle Mr. Trump.

Sport

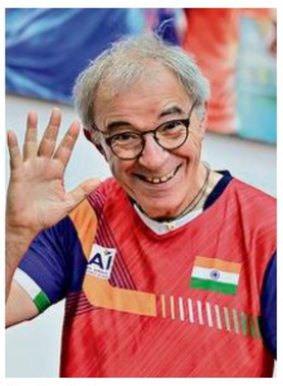
'WTT Star Contender a good chance for Indians to beat higher-ranked players'

K. Keerthivasan
CHENNAI

India's head coach Massimo Costantini, who had just returned to India with the National table tennis team after a week-long training camp in Sweden, said he's looking forward to some exciting round of table tennis, with the WTT Star Contender Chennai set to begin on March 27.

The 66-year-old Italian picked Japan's Harimoto Tomokazu and Hina Hayata as the favourites in men's and women's singles, but insisted it will not be easy for them.

"The Japanese are the most probable winners here. I am not basing my judgement on this tournament but seeing their performances in the last one year. Harimoto is the reigning Asian champion and he has beaten lots of top Chinese players.



Costantini.
FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

Head coach Massimo Costantini feels Indians can reach the round-of-16 or the quarterfinals in singles in Chennai

"Having said that, he may find hurdles on the way. In the women's section, Japan's Hina Hayata is the favourite. She is not unbeatable as Satsuki Odo (Japan) and Taipei's Cheng-I-Ching can stop Hina," he said.

According to Massimo, Indians can reach the round-of-16 or the quarterfinals in singles in Chennai.

"All the top eight to 10 ranked players in the field are really strong as they have the habit of winning, which Indians still don't have. We need to bridge the gap so that we get that kind of confidence. The WTT Star Contender is a good opportunity for Indians to beat higher-ranked players. If they have a favourable draw, Indians can enter the last 16 or quarterfinals," said Massimo – who was here on Sunday taking coaching classes for coaches who were part of the Dream Sports Foundation u-15 championships – to *The Hindu*.

His next big challenge, Massimo said, is the World (individual) championships to be held in Doha from May 17 to 25.

"The team for the fourth (singles) player in the World championships is yet to be decided. I will take a call after seeing their performances in Chennai."

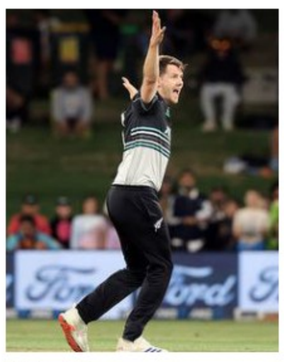
Allen, Duffy the stars as NZ routs Pakistan, seals T20I series

Agence France-Presse
MOUNT MAUNGANUI

New Zealand's ruthless pace attack carved up Pakistan to deliver a crushing 115-run win in the fourth T20I on Sunday and clinch the five-match series. The home side moved 3-1 ahead after defending 220 for six and then dismissing a ragged Pakistan for just 105 in the 17th over.

Jacob Duffy claimed four for 20 and fellow seamer Zak Foulkes three for 25 as Pakistan suffered its biggest T20I loss by runs against all nations.

Earlier, Finn Allen raced to 50 off just 20 balls, putting on 59 for New Zealand's opening stand with Tim Seifert, whose 44 took 22 deliveries.



Duffy. AFP

The scores: New Zealand 220/6 in 20 overs (Allen 50, Bracewell 46, Seifert 44, Rauf 3/27) bt Pakistan 105 in 16.2 overs (Samad 44, Duffy 4/20, Foulkes 3/25).

Walker Priyanka sets 35km National record

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Commonwealth Games medallist race walker Priyanka Goswami set a National record in women's 35km during the Dudinska 50 competition in Dudince, Slovakia.

She clocked 2:56:34 on Saturday to finish 11th in the 44th edition of Dudinska 50, a World Athletics Race Walking Tour Gold Label meet that is held annually on the streets of Dudince in March. Her previous best was 3:13:19.

A two-time Olympian, Priyanka bettered the previous National record of 2:57:54 set by Manju Rani at the 2023 National Open race walking championships in Ranchi.

Priyanka.
FILE PHOTO: RITU RAJ KONWAR

Paula Milena Torres of Ecuador won in 2:44:26 while Peru's Kimberly Garcia (2:45:59) and Poland's Katarzyna Zdziebło (2:46:59) finished second and third respectively.

Akashdeep Singh finished sixth in the men's 20km race walk in 1:24:13.

A REVELATION

Vignesh a product of MI's talent scouts, has a bright future: Surya

R. RAGU

Mumbai Indians skipper Suryakumar Yadav predicted a bright future for Vignesh Puthur. "MI is known for that (giving youngsters chances). The scouts go around for 10 months and he (Vignesh) is a product of that. He has a bright future. I kept his one over in the pocket if the game went deep," revealed Suryakumar.

EMOTIONAL

Enthusiastic celebration was for my loved ones, says Kishan

K.V.S. GIRI

SRH's new recruit Ishan Kishan said the enthusiastic celebration after scoring his maiden IPL century was a dedication to all the loved ones who supported him when he was fighting to regain his form, including his brother in the stands. "That flying kiss was for all my loved ones. My brother was there [in the stadium]," he said.

GAMEPLAN

I like bowling at the Eden Gardens: Royal Challengers' Hazlewood

AP

It was sort of just sticking in the pitch a little bit. The bounce was quite good. I like bowling at Eden Gardens and we just sort of stuck to our lengths. Krunal Pandya bowled beautifully and luckily we got to bowl at sort of the tail towards the end. The hard lengths work best out here most of the time - RCB's Josh Hazlewood after win over KKR.

AT HOME

Gujarat Titans gives a lot of freedom to the players: Rabada

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

He has played for Delhi Capitals and Punjab Kings, but Kagiso Rabada feels at home in his new franchise Gujarat Titans, having already grown a liking for head coach Ashish Nehra. "Yeah, it's been very relaxed. A lot of freedom that's been given to the players, but there's still a structure. I'm really happy with how everything has run here."

After Noor's magic spell, Rachin takes CSK home

The Afghan spinner sizzles with a four-wicket haul to restrict Mumbai to 155; skipper Ruturaj sets the early pace with a blistering knock before the Kiwi opener provides the finishing touches

IPL-18

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

At the mega auction last year, Chennai Super Kings and Mumbai Indians fought hard for Noor Ahmad's services, and the former won the battle at ₹5 crore. Noor's previous team, Gujarat Titans, used its Right to Match card, but CSK had no hesitation in doubling its bid to ₹10 crore to get the Afghanistan tweaker eventually.

On Sunday, the 20-year-old gave a glimpse of why he was the Super Kings' costliest buy, delivering a brilliant spell (4-0-18-4) to set up a four-wicket win against Mumbai Indians in their IPL league match at the MAC Stadium.

Electing to field, CSK's bowlers, led by the spinners, picked up wickets at regular intervals to restrict the Mumbai side to 155 for nine.

In pursuit of 156, Ruturaj Gaikwad led the way for the hosts with a quickfire 53 (26b, 6x4, 3x6). The CSK skipper got into his stride with trademark cover drives off Trent Boult. He then smashed Mitchell Santner for a six and two boundaries as CSK reached 62 for one in the PowerPlay.

Shining bright: The wily Noor proved a handful for the Mumbai batters. R. RAGU

Vignesh strikes

Suryakumar Yadav's men fought back when debutant left-arm wrist spinner Vignesh Puthur took a wicket each in his first three overs to put the brakes on the chase.

However, opener Rachin Ravindra (65 n.o., 45b, 2x4, 4x6) held fort at one end and shifted gears seamlessly, lofting Vignesh twice over the ropes as 15 came off the 18th over.

Earlier, after losing three early wickets, Tilak Varma (31) and Suryakumar counter-attacked to set a good foundation for the visitors, adding 51 for the fourth wicket.

Just when the partnership looked threatening, Noor showed his class, striking thrice in two overs to leave Mumbai tottering at 96 for six in the 13th. He bamboozled Suryakumar with a wrong 'un that spun sharply past the India T20 skipper, who had wandered out of the crease, and M.S. Dhoni removed the bails in a flash.

In his next over, Noor had Robin Minz caught in the deep and, two balls later, trapped Tilak in front. Deepak Chahar (28 n.o.) inflicted some pain on his former team, smashing a few sixes, but it was not enough in the end.

SCOREBOARD

MUMBAI INDIANS
Rohit Sharma c Dube b Khaleel 0 *(4b)*, Ryan Rickleton b Khaleel 13 *(7b, 3x4)*, Will Jacks c Dube b Ashwin 11 *(7b, 2x4)*, Suryakumar Yadav st. Dhoni b Noor 29 *(26b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Tilak Varma lbw b Noor 31 *(25b, 2x4, 2x6)*, Robin Minz c Jadeja b Noor 3 *(9b)*, Naman Dhir b Noor 17 *(12b, 1x4)*, Mitchell Santner lbw b Ellis 11 *(13b, 1x4)*, Deepak Chahar (not out) 28 *(15b, 2x4, 2x6)*, Trent Boult c Ruturaj b Khaleel 1 *(2b)*, Satyanarayana Raju (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (b-4, lb-1, nb-1, w-4): 10; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 155.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-0 (Rohit, 0.4 overs), 2-21 (Rickleton, 2.2), 3-26 (Jacks, 4.4), 4-87 (Suryakumar, 10.3), 5-95 (Minz, 12.4), 6-96 (Tilak, 12.6), 7-118 (Naman, 16.1), 8-128 (Santner, 17.6), 9-141 (Boult, 18.6).

SUPER KINGS BOWLING
Khaleel 4-0-29-3, Curran 1-0-13-0, Ellis 4-0-38-1, Ashwin 4-0-31-1, Jadeja 3-0-21-0, Noor 4-0-18-4.

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS
Rachin Ravindra (not out) 65 *(45b, 2x4, 4x6)*, Rahul Tripathi **(Impact Player for Khaleel)** c Rickelton b Chahar 2 *(3b)*, Ruturaj Gaikwad c Jacks b Vignesh 53 *(26b, 6x4, 3x6)*, Shivam Dube c Tilak b Vignesh 9 *(7b, 1x6)*, Deepak Hooda c Satyanarayana b Vignesh 3 *(5b)*, Sam Curran b Jacks 4 *(9b)*, Ravindra Jadeja run out 17 *(18b, 1x4)*, M.S. Dhoni (not out) 0 *(2b)*; Extras (w-5): 5; Total (for six wkts. in 19.1 overs): 158.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-11 (Tripathi, 1.4), 2-78 (Ruturaj, 7.5), 3-95 (Dube, 9.4), 4-107 (Hooda, 11.4), 5-116 (Curran, 14.1), 6-152 (Jadeja, 18.4).

MUMBAI INDIANS BOWLING
Boult 3-0-27-0, Chahar 2-0-18-1, Satyanarayana 1-0-13-0, Santner 2.1-0-24-0, Jacks 4-0-32-1, Vignesh **(Impact Player for Rohit)** 4-0-32-3, Naman 3-0-12-0.

Toss: CSK; **PoM:** Noor.
CSK won by four wickets with five deliveries to spare.

Next assignment

CSK: March 28 vs RCB
Chennai, 7.30 p.m.

MI: March 29 vs GT
Ahmedabad, 7.30 p.m.

Fireworks from Kishan lights up Sunrisers' season-opener

Anirudh Velamuri
HYDERABAD

New season, rejigged teams but the same old Sunrisers Hyderabad.

The power-packed batting, headlined by Ishan Kishan's unbeaten century, set up a 44-run win over Rajasthan Royals in its IPL-2025 season opener at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium here on Sunday.

Abhishek Sharma gave the home side an explosive start, smacking Fazalhaq Farooqi for five boundaries in his opening spell before falling to Maheesh Theekshana.

Masterclass: Kishan headlined Sunrisers' explosive batting, notching up his maiden IPL century off just 47 deliveries. K.V.S. GIRI

Standout

With SRH crossing the 50-run mark in just four overs, Riyan Parag brought Jofra Archer into the attack.

Travis Head showed no mercy, smashing four boundaries and a monstrous 106m six, much to the delight of the boisterous home crowd.

He kept the fireworks going beyond the Power-Play, bringing up his half-century off 21 balls.

Tushar Deshpande, back after a long injury layoff, brought the Australian's assault to an end in the 10th over.

The newly-signed Kishan then broke free with Nitish Kumar Reddy for company. He pummelled Archer for back-to-back sixes to register a blistering half-century, off 25 balls.

Buoyed by the quickfire start, the former MI keeper-batter kept the runs flowing. In the penultimate over, he cleared the fence on either side of the wicket to notch up his maiden IPL ton.

The 287-run target, set with a boundary off the final ball, was daunting and the Royals stumbled right at the start.

Simarjeet Singh sent Yashasvi Jaiswal and Riyan Parag packing in his first over to widen the distance between the two teams. Mohammed Shami seeing off Nitish Rana back to the pavilion deepened Royals' troubles.

Brave resistance

Sanju Samson (66 off 37 balls) and Dhruv Jurel (70 off 35 balls) forged a brave resistance with a 111-run stand for the fourth wicket. However, both fell in the space of three balls, the former to Harshal Patel and the latter to Adam Zampa.

The Royals then found it difficult to keep up with the mounting run-rate, despite Shubham Dubey and Shimron Hetmyer's best efforts.

In a ground that has traditionally favoured the chasing teams (1.235 W/L ratio in IPL), SRH bucked the trend to begin its campaign on a victorious note.

SCOREBOARD

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD
Abhishek Sharma c Jaiswal b Theekshana 24 *(11b, 5x4)*, Travis Head c Hetmyer b Deshpande 67 *(31b, 9x4, 3x6)*, Ishan Kishan (not out) 106 *(47b, 11x4, 6x6)*, Nitish Kumar c Jaiswal b Theekshana 30 *(15b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Heinrich Klaasen c Parag b Sandeep 34 *(14b, 5x4, 1x6)*, Aniket Verma c Archer b Deshpande 7 *(3b, 1x6)*, Abhinav Manohar c Parag b Deshpande 0 *(1b)*, Pat Cummins (not out) 0 *(1b)*; Extras (b-4, lb-1, nb-3, w-10): 18; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 286.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-45 (Abhishek, 3.1 overs), 2-130 (Head, 9.3), 3-202 (Nitish Kumar, 14.2), 4-258 (Klaasen, 18.2), 5-279 (Aniket, 19.2), 6-279 (Abhinav, 19.3).

ROYALS BOWLING
Farooqi 3-0-49-0, Theekshana 4-0-52-2, Archer 4-0-76-0, Sandeep 4-0-51-1, Nitish Rana 1-0-9-0, Deshpande 4-0-44-3.

RAJASTHAN ROYALS
Yashasvi Jaiswal c Abhinav b Simarjeet 1 *(5b)*, Sanju Samson **(Impact Player for Farooqi)** c Klaasen b Harshal 66 *(37b, 7x4, 4x6)*, Riyan Parag c Cummins b Simarjeet 4 *(2b, 1x4)*, Nitish Rana c Cummins b Shami 11 *(8b, 2x4)*, Dhruv Jurel c Kishan b Zampa 70 *(35b, 5x4, 6x6)*, Shimron Hetmyer c Abhinav b Harshal 42 *(23b, 1x4, 4x6)*, Shubham Dubey (not out) 34 *(11b, 1x4, 4x6)*, Jofra Archer (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (b-4, nb-2, w-7): 13; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 242.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-20 (Jaiswal, 1.3), 2-24 (Parag, 1.5), 3-50 (Nitish Rana, 4.1), 4-161 (Samson, 13.6), 5-161 (Jurel, 14.2), 6-241 (Hetmyer, 19.5).

SUNRISERS BOWLING
Shami 3-0-33-1, Simarjeet 3-0-46-2, Cummins 4-0-60-0, Abhishek 2-0-17-0, Zampa **(Impact Player for Head)** 4-0-48-1, Harshal 4-0-34-2.

Toss: Royals.
PoM: Kishan.
Sunrisers won by 44 runs.

Next assignment

RR: March 26 vs KKR
Guwahati, 7.30 p.m.

SRH: March 27 vs LSG
Hyderabad, 7.30 p.m.

Making heads turn

One to remember: The 24-year-old Vignesh Puthur's splendid debut on the big stage was applauded by the goodly Chennai crowd, including the legend M.S. Dhoni. R. RAGU

Injury-hit Super Giants clash with formidable Capitals

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
VISAKHAPATNAM

Lucknow Super Giants finds itself in an unfortunate position even before it begins its IPL campaign against Delhi Capitals at the Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VDCA stadium on Monday.

It has lost four frontline Indian pacers – Mayank Yadav, Avesh Khan, Akash Deep, and Mohsin Khan – to injuries. While there's still hope for the first three to join the team later in the tournament, Mohsin has been ruled out and replaced by India all-rounder Shardul Thakur.

Meanwhile, head coach Justin Langer on Sunday expressed his excitement for the 27-year-old Uttar Pradesh pacer Prince Yadav and contended that the team has a good spin contingent, led by M. Siddharth. But whatever bowling unit the team fields on Monday, it will face a stiff challenge against the Capitals batters.

Capitals opener Jake Fraser-McGurk, who was hitting sixes against spinners at practice on Sunday, has to be defused as early as possible. K.L. Rahul, missing in training, is unlikely to play. Faf du Plessis might open with Fraser-McGurk. For Giants, Langer hinted that Mitchell Marsh and Aiden Markram might open. A lot would depend on how their strong middle-order – Rishabh Pant, Nicholas Pooran, and David Miller – fares against Capitals' left-arm tweakers Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav. Preparing for it, Nicholas Pooran was seen facing three left-arm spinners at the nets. Relatively, Capitals looks a well-rounded team on paper, especially with pacers Mitchell Starc, Mohit Sharma, and T. Natarajan in their ranks.

Today's match

DELHI CAPITALS vs LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS

Visakhapatnam, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 5
DC 2 | LSG 3

PREVIOUS MEETING
DC won by **19 runs**, 2024

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIOHOTSTAR

All in the game: The rival captains, Axar and Pant share a lighter moment ahead of Monday's match. K.R. DEEPAK

INBRIEF

Tributes paid to Eddie Jordan ahead of Chinese GP

Drivers and teams assembled on the Chinese Grand Prix grid on Sunday to pay their respects to Eddie Jordan, the former Formula One team owner who died on Thursday aged 76. A tribute to the flamboyant Irishman's life was shown on giant screens. Jordan achieved rare success as an independent team owner in the fiercely competitive world of Formula One, winning four Grand Prix in 15 years in the sport.

Jaismine and Sanamacha advance to the quarterfinals

CWG medallist and Olympian Jaismine Lamboria continued dominance in the ring with a second knockout win in as many days to storm into the quarterfinals of the eighth elite women's National boxing championship in Greater Noida on Sunday. Jaismine, one of only two Services boxers in the competition, defeated Chandigarh's Ruchika with a RSC victory in the second round of the 57kg category. Also advancing was Railways' promising youngster Sanamacha Chanu with a unanimous 5-0 win over Manipur's Bindiya Devi Maorem. The quarterfinals will be held over the next two days with the final scheduled for March 27.

Uthra Ganesan

Yuki-Borges duo overcomes Bopanna-Dodig pair in Miami

Yuki Bhambri and Nuno Borges of Portugal beat Rohan Bopanna and Ivan Dodig 6-4, 3-6, [10-7] in the doubles first round of the $9,193,540 ATP tournament in Miami. Yuki and Nuno will play Jamie Murray of Great Britain and Czech Republic's Adam Pavlasek in pre-quarterfinals. Murray and Pavlasek beat fourth seeds Marcel Granollers of Spain and Horacio Zeballos of Argentina 10-7 in the super tie-breaker.

Tamil Nadu and Karnataka make the women's final

Top-scorer A. Nikitha (28 points) helped Tamil Nadu defeat Kerala 70-61 in the women's semifinals of the National under-23 basketball championships in Guwahati on Sunday. Tamil Nadu will face Karnataka, which got past Delhi in the other last-four clash, in the final. Haryana rallied in the fourth quarter to beat Karnataka, which led in third and fourth periods after sharing honours in the first, 84-70, and set up a summit clash with Punjab, which defeated Rajasthan, in the men's section.

The results: Semifinals: Men: Haryana 84 (Sahil Sharma 21, G. Deependar 15) bt Karnataka 70 (B.M. Manoj 21, K.P. Dinesh 15); Punjab 107 (Manpreet Singh 28, Aman Sandhu 24) bt Rajasthan 101 (Akshit Hooda 35, Ayush Choudhary 24). **Women:** Karnataka 84 (Niharika Reddy 27, Mekhala Gowda 18) bt Delhi 48 (Rashi Kotani 21); Tamil Nadu 70 (A. Nithika 28, Amritha Varshini 15) bt Kerala 61 (Akshaya Philip 27, Irin Elsa John 12).

Vidal bests Berry in the playoffs to take the honours

Spaniard Quim Vidal won the playoff on the third hole to beat the champion of the last tournament Joshua Berry of England after the two tied for the top spot with 18-under 270 in the $300,000 Delhi Challenge golf tournament in Gurugram on Sunday. After starting the day with a three-shot lead, Vidal had to make a 30-feet eagle putt on the 18th to force the play-off with a one-under 71 for the fourth round. Joshua had six birdies and two bogeys for his round of 68. Arjun Prasad made six birdies and a bogey in his fourth round of 67 to be the best Indian at tied sixth with 15-under 273. The champion won ₹41,28,000 and the runner-up ₹28,38,000. Arjun took home ₹7,53,360.

Top placings: 1. Quim Vidal (Esp) (65, 68, 66, 71) 270; 2. Joshua Berry (Eng) (69, 66, 67, 68) 270; 3. Lars Van Meijel (Ned) (70, 70, 65, 65) 271; 4T. Filippo Celli (Ita) (69, 69, 69, 65), Maximilian Steinlechner (Aut) (69, 69, 65, 69) 272.

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.

Piastri drives to his third career win

Norris secures a McLaren one-two, stretches championship lead; Hamilton and Leclerc disqualified for technical reasons after finishing fifth and sixth

CHINESE GP

Reuters
SHANGHAI

Australian Oscar Piastri roared back from season-opening disappointment to win the Chinese Formula One Grand Prix in a McLaren one-two on Sunday while Ferrari had both drivers disqualified.

Lando Norris held on with fading brakes for second place ahead of Mercedes rival George Russell to stretch his championship lead, over Red Bull's Max Verstappen, to eight points after two race weekends.

Verstappen was fourth with Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and Saturday sprint winner Lewis Hamilton finishing fifth and sixth before being disqualified when their cars failed post-race technical checks. Leclerc's was underweight while Hamilton's had suffered excessive skid wear.

Piastri's win from pole position denied Norris a third victory in a row, including last year's Abu Dhabi season-ender, but left champion McLaren still unbeaten this season.

"Mega job guys. The car was very, very lovely," Piastri said over the team radio after taking the chequered flag – an echo of Verstappen's 'simply lovely' catchphrase heard so often in the past.

"I'm just so proud of the whole weekend. This is what I feel like I deserved from last week," added the Australian, who finished ninth in Melbourne.

Norris now has 44 points to Verstappen's 36 and Russell's 35. Piastri, who was second in the sprint, is on 34.

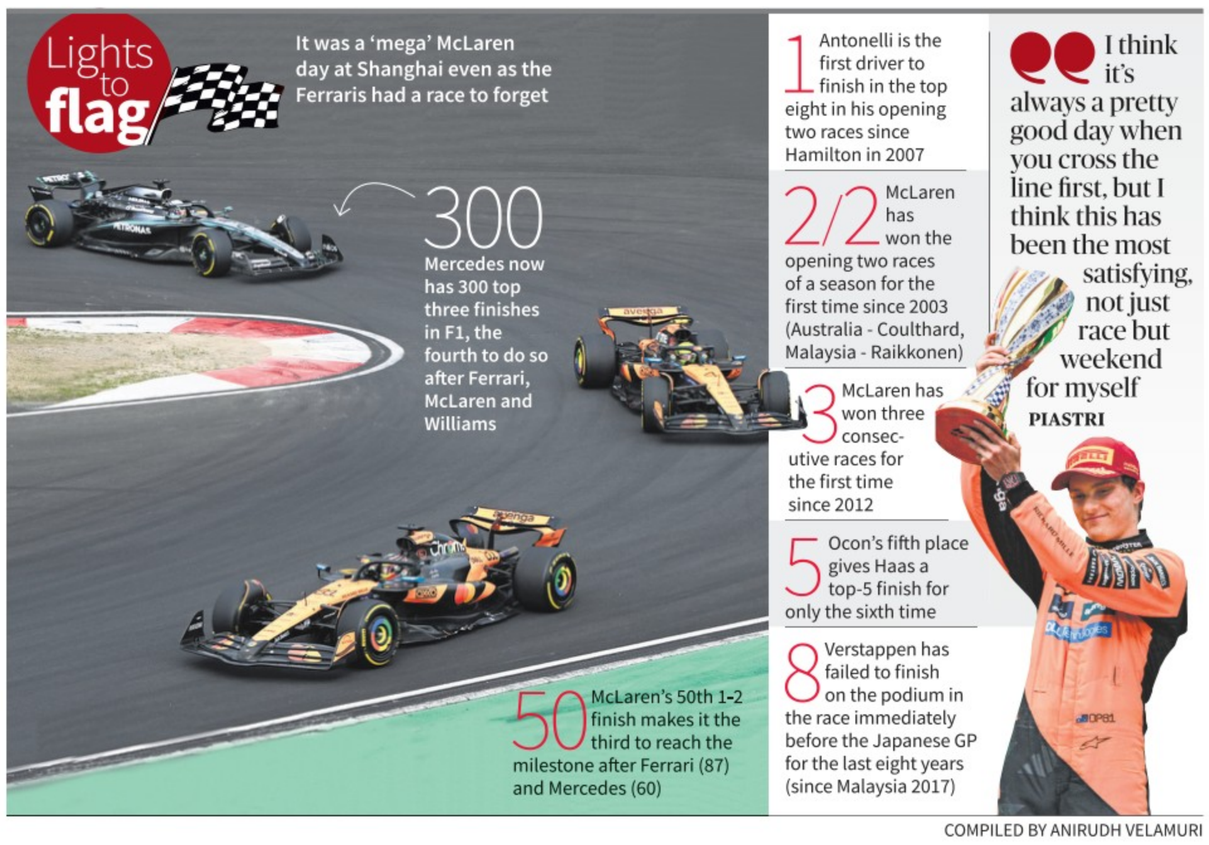
McLaren is 21 points clear of Mercedes, with Italian rookie Andrea Kimi Antonelli moving up to sixth following the Ferrari disqualification.

The results: 1. Oscar Piastri (McLaren) 1hr 30min 55.026sec; 2. Lando Norris (McLaren) + 9.748s; 3. George Russell (Mercedes) + 11.097; 4. Max Verstappen (Red Bull) + 16.656; 5. Esteban Ocon (Haas) + 49.969, 6. Kimi Antonelli (Mercedes) + 53.748, 7. Alexander Albon (Williams) + 56.321, 8. Oliver Bearman (Haas) + 61.303; 9. Lance Stroll (Aston Martin) + 70.204, 10. Carlos Sainz Jr (Williams) + 76.387, 11. Isack Hadjar (RB) + 78.875, 12. Liam Lawson (Red Bull) + 81.147; 13. Jack Doohan (Alpine) at 88.401.

1 lap: 14. Gabriel Bortoleto (Sauber), 15. Nico Hulkenberg (Sauber), 16. Yuki Tsunoda (RB). **Retd.:** Fernando Alonso (Aston Martin). **DQ:** Pierre Gasly (Alpine), Lewis Hamilton (Ferrari), Charles Leclerc (Ferrari).

Standings: Drivers: 1. Norris 44 pts., 2. Verstappen 36, 3. Russell 35, 4. Piastri 34, 5. Antonelli 22, 6. Albon 16, 7. Ocon 10, 8. Stroll 10, 9. Hamilton 9, 10. Leclerc 8, 11. Hulkenberg 6, 12. Bearman 4, 13. Tsunoda 3, 14. Sainz Jr. 1.

Constructors: 1. McLaren 78 pts., 2. Mercedes 53, 3. Red Bull 36, 4. Williams 17, 5. Ferrari 17, 6. Haas 14, 7. Aston Martin 10, 8. Sauber 6, 9. RB 3.



COMPILED BY ANIRUDH VELAMURI

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Champions: The victorious HBR and DYES (Vidhyanagar) squads. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

HBR and DYES hoopsters take the honours

HBR BC and DYES (Vidhyanagar) emerged as the champions of the State Youth basketball championship at MNK Rao Basketball Courts (Basavangudi) here.

The results (final): Boys: HBR BC 53 (Rishith Bhusery 29) bt MNK Rao Park BC 43 (Vashist 15, Ujjwal Jhadav 12). **Girls:** DYES (Vidhyanagar) 66 (Ishitha 29, Nireksha 16) bt Mysore District 'A' 65 (S. Sharavani 32, Aanchal 16).

Rewarding excellence: The Karnataka Badminton Association felicitated State players who won National titles in 2024. Cash prize of ₹14.75 lakh was distributed to the awardees. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

On target: Payal enjoys defying the odds with the bow and arrow. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Archery enables Payal to rise above obstacles

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

At the archery arena of the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, a few claps and cheers rang out before the sixth match of a sunny Sunday morning.

That Sheetal Devi was eyeing gold in the women's compound archery event of the second Khelo India Para Games was one reason.

The 18-year-old para archer from Jammu & Kashmir rose to popularity in 2024 when she won bronze in the mixed team compound event at the Paris Paralympics. She uses her legs to shoot the arrow, a rare medical condition resulting in the absence of arms at birth.

But the interest around this particular contest also had to do with the opponent challenging Sheetal for the top prize. That was Payal Nag, a 17-year-old para archer from Odisha who lost her arms and legs due to an electrocution accident in 2015.

Peppy smile

Notwithstanding the tragic turn that her life took a decade ago, she wears a peppy smile and enjoys defying the odds with the bow and arrow. While she was second-best in Sunday's final, she was quick to point out that she defeated Sheetal at the para archery Nationals in Jaipur in January to clinch gold.

"This is my first time at Khelo India. So, I was feeling nervous competing in front of these many people. But it felt good once I started playing. I have beaten Sheetal once in the past. So I wasn't scared. I was playing with confidence," Payal, who was introduced to archery only two years ago, told *The Hindu*.

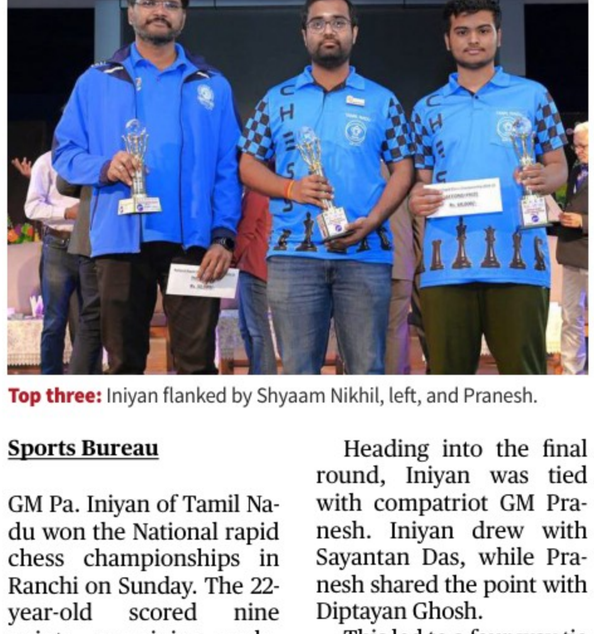
The common link to both differently-abled teenagers is coach Kuldeep Vedwan.

"Payal is the first archer in the world, male or female, without arms and legs," Vedwan, who used to train Sheetal, said. "I saw Payal through a post on X. I saw it as a challenge to train someone without any of the limbs. I went to her village in Balangir in Odisha. She was at an orphanage and I took her from there to my academy."

To add to Payal's hurdles, informed Vedwan, World Archery came up with an objection recently about her way of releasing the arrow.

"She was using a device where both her prosthetic legs helped release the arrow. But the world body had an objection to that. The rules allow you to push with one limb and pull with one limb. So I changed the device. She has been using it only for the past one month," he elaborated. "She now pushes with her prosthetic right leg and pulls with her right shoulder. Earlier, she would push with both her legs and pull with her right shoulder."

Iniyan reigns in National rapid chess championship



Top three: Iniyan flanked by Shyaam Nikhil, left, and Pranesh.

Sports Bureau

GM Pa. Iniyan of Tamil Nadu won the National rapid chess championships in Ranchi on Sunday. The 22-year-old scored nine points, remaining undefeated with seven wins and four draws.

He started with five straight wins, and after alternating draw and win, he scored a crucial win in the 10th and penultimate game against GM Neelotpal Das of PSPB.

Heading into the final round, Iniyan was tied with compatriot GM Pranesh. Iniyan drew with Sayantan Das, while Pranesh shared the point with Diptayan Ghosh.

This led to a four-way tie for the first place where Iniyan clinched the championship on better tie-breaks.

Final placings:
1. Pa. Iniyan (TN), 2. M. Pranesh (TN), 3. P. Shyaam Nikhil (Railways), 4. Diptayan Ghosh (Railways).

Indian Open 400m competition from today

M.R. Praveen Chandran
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

As a new season unfurls, quartermilers will be again in the limelight as Athletics Federation of India (AFI) looks to re-jig the 4x400 relay squads after a poor show in Paris Olympics.

Despite being the season-opener, the sixth Indian Open 400m competition 2025, which gets underway at the LNCPE Athletics stadium on Monday, has evoked significant interest with 49 entries in the men's competition.

However, Mohammed Ajmal, Mohammed Anas, Arokia Rajiv, Noah Nirmal Tom, Amoj Jacob, Rajesh Ramesh who were part of Indian relay squad in the last season will not be taking part in the meet.

In their absence, the focus will be on national campers attached to NCOE here. Being the lung opener, more than the timing, the meet will be an assessment on the fitness of the athetes in the camp.

In the women's section, the entries are significantly lesser with only 18 athletes in fray. Rupal, Prachi, R. Vithya Ramraj, Jisna Mathew, Anu R are some of the leading runners who will be seen in action. Competition will also be held in the u-20 and 18 categories for boys and girls.

Mansell wins Porsche Singapore Classic

Agence France-Presse
SINGAPORE

Richard Mansell sank a crucial birdie putt at the final hole to win a first DP World Tour title at the weather-hit Porsche Singapore Classic by one shot on Sunday. Japan's Keita Nakajima had a bogey-free 65 to finish second.